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Backwoods

Jan/Feb 2002

No. 73

\$4.95 US

\$6.50 Canada



Home magazine

practical ideas for self-reliant living

How ready are you?



Survival garden
Getting out of Dodge
Emergency solar power
Storing food and water
Living without electricity
Biological & chemical terrorism

WIN

a \$159

emergency radio

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Backwoods Home Magazine is written for people who have a desire to pursue personal independence, self sufficiency, and their dreams. It offers "how to" articles on owner-built housing, independent energy, gardening, health, self-employment, country living, and other topics related to an independent and self-reliant lifestyle.

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IDENTIFICATION STATEMENT:

Backwoods Home Magazine (ISSN No. 1050-9712) is published bimonthly (six times a year) for \$21.95 per year by Backwoods Home Magazine, Inc., 29304 Ellensburg Ave., Gold Beach, OR 97444. Periodicals Postage Rate is paid at Gold Beach, OR, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Backwoods Home Magazine, PO Box 712, Gold Beach, OR 97444.

Published in Gold Beach, Oregon, U.S.A.

About the cover



This issue's cover was painted by Don Childers and first used in Issue 57 to illustrate an article by John Silveira titled The chances of global disaster. It seems appropriate to use that painting again as the cover for this special issue. In that previous article, while writing of the chances of a worldwide plague, Silveira wrote:

"More intriguing is the possibility of a worldwide plague. It may be that the only reason Europeans got a foothold in the New World was because plagues of smallpox, measles, tuberculosis, and other Old World diseases, to which Europeans had some resistance, spread like wildfire through populations that had no resistance. It's unlikely that Cortez and a band of a few hundred men defeated the entire Aztec Empire. More likely, the entire population on two continents fell victim to catastrophic plagues that ran rampant, and the Europeans stepped in to fill the vacuum."

"Is there historic evidence to support that?" Dave asked.

"Yes."

"So, by inference, it could happen again, but this time the whole world would be subject to it," Dave said.

"Today," Mac said, "we may be faced by germs and viruses that are mutating and, at the same time, becoming resistant to antibiotics. Virulent microbes, natural or engineered, could even be unleashed in a

terrorist attack or during a war between Third World countries. Biological weapons containing anthrax, smallpox, bubonic plague, and the like have been called the 'poor man's atom bomb.'

"Imagine a plague that sweeps the world like the Influenza Epidemic of 1918-19, but spreads faster and kills the infected more quickly—and there are no antibiotics, no vaccines. Influenza, AIDS, and many other historically common diseases—or even more exotic microbes such as the ebola virus, which is 50-90 percent fatal—are candidates for a plague of biblical proportions if they mutated in just the right way and got a chance to spread. With today's rapid air travel, a worldwide plague could spread before we knew what hit us."

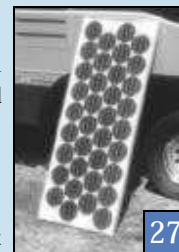
The entire text of that article is in the May/June 1999 Issue (No. 57) and is part of the current "15 Selected Issues" special on page 73, or you can order it from the Order Form on page 89.

FEATURES

Independent energy

27 Emergency solar power for \$950 By Jeffrey R. Yago

For less than the price of a desktop computer you can ensure long-term power for basic and essential equipment including batteries, solar panels, and a solar charger controller. Jeff Yago explains what you need and how to set up your emergency system.



61 How do you live without electricity? By Anita Evangelista

Electric power is necessary for light, delivering water, cooking, heating/cooling, and communications. But do you know what to do if the power goes off? Anita Evangelista discusses how to get along if your power fails so you can keep your life running as smoothly as possible.



Self-sufficiency

42 Long-term food storage By Jackie Clay

Jackie Clay talks about a sensible and practical food storage program that will carry your family, and even some unexpected guests, through a year of healthful eating.



22 Living the outlaw life: Freedom tomorrow By Claire Wolfe

With panic running rampant among America's politicians, it seems that every solution they offer to combat terrorism is to take away more of our freedoms. Claire Wolfe explains what you and I have got to do to win those freedoms back.

8 Getting out of Dodge By Luke Lee

With more humor than you'd think possible in such a serious subject, Luke Lee writes about the steps he is taking to get away from the city. He discusses the financial aspects, acquiring tools, learning new skills, evaluating your options, and more.



Farm and garden

36 The survival garden By Alice Brantley Yeager

Among the most important things anyone can do in uncertain times is to ensure a supply of wholesome food for our families. One of the best steps you can take is to plant a garden. Alice Yeager provides an overview of how to go about planning for and preparing a garden, what you might grow, and how to preserve the harvest.



Terrorism

14 Biological & chemical terrorism By Dave Duffy

The threat from biological and chemical terrorism is real, but it is a mixed threat. Terrorists can inflict scattered casualties on us, for sure, but they probably can't do a lot of damage. Smallpox may be a far greater threat than anthrax, and chemical terrorism with scattered attacks of nerve agent is a concern. Dave Duffy tries to put all the threats in perspective.

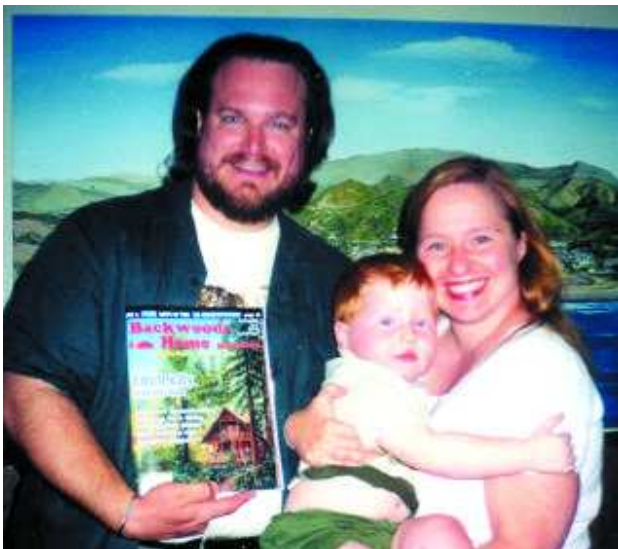
Publisher's Note

Special Preparedness Issue

Wow, what a symbolic cover for this issue: the world splitting in half. I'm not really sure what it means, but we hope it will make a lot of people pick up the magazine and read it. It's an important issue for people who don't know a lot about preparedness, or who have difficulty putting America's terrorist crisis into perspective. There is reason to be concerned, but not to panic. The self-reliance approach that *BHM* has always promoted is perfect for this crisis: take care of yourself and your family by making common sense preparedness preparations and everything will be just fine—for you at least. As we usually do, this issue looks at the politics of preparation, as well as the nuts and bolts of storing food and water and otherwise keeping your family safe.

I've gotten two especially interesting letters concerning the terrorist threat. One was from a biology professor in Milwaukee who said a few pounds of weapons grade anthrax, properly delivered, could depopulate a city. The other was from a retired sergeant in Mesa, AZ, who was a military weapons and munitions expert. He said the threat was minimal, consisting mainly of our own fear. I tried to strike a sensible balance in my own article on page 14. I also have military training in chemical and biological weapons, and I tend to side with the sergeant: the terrorists can kill a few of us, but their main weapon is just terror.

From a personal preparedness view, the "fear factor" in this terrorist crisis may be our main worry anyway. The



FINDING LOVE THROUGH BHM — Jonathan and Emily Whiting, with son Tyler, age 2, stopped by the BHM office to say thanks. The South Prairie, WA, couple met through a classified ad in the magazine.



JUST BEING CAREFUL — Nathele Graham sorts the BHM mail. Like other media across the country, we've become extra vigilant.

willingness of our nation's newspapers to play up any terrorist threat could work to our serious disadvantage. For example, if it were widely reported that terrorists had a tanker truck load of anthrax somewhere on the nation's highways, it could quickly bring the trucking industry to a halt, which would quickly empty our supermarkets. It won't matter much if it's a credible threat; it just has to be reported widely.

Our best protection against something like this happening is to store food, water, and other necessary supplies for our own family. It's a simple solution that the usual readers of this magazine do anyway. This magazine's philosophy that we personally should always be prepared is a very timely philosophy right now. Our preparedness guide advertised on page 2 of this issue will help those who are not properly prepared.

They met through the classifieds

And now to the good news. Between issues we got a nice visit from Jonathan and Emily Whiting of South Prairie, Washington. They had met through a personal ad Emily had placed in the *BHM* classifieds. We sell the personals at half price to encourage people to meet each other, so we were delighted. Two writers for *BHM* have also met their wives through the magazine's personal classifieds.

Win a \$159 emergency radio

On page 28 of Jeff Yago's article about an emergency solar system, he talks about the excellent \$159 C. Crane emergency radio, which is advertised on page 31. We'll give one of the radios away between issues in a drawing from among current subscribers. You must subscribe by February 15 to be eligible. — Dave

My view

We should have seen this one coming

The first question you should ask about your enemy is why he is your enemy in the first place.—Joseph Sobran, writing about Sept. 11th just hours after it happened.

In 1961 I went to college fresh from a farm in Derry, New Hampshire. Up to that time the only foreigners I'd ever met were my family's relatives from Portugal and my stepfather's Italian relatives. But they don't count because by the time I was born they were all naturalized citizens and not foreigners anymore. In high school I'd also met some Puerto Rican migrant workers with whom I picked apples when I worked at Apple Hill Farm. But they weren't foreigners either because as the song says, "*Nobody knows in America, Puerto Rico's in America.*"

So the first *real* foreigners I met were some Middle Eastern students when I was a freshman in college. They came from a place I'd never heard of before. Just a few months earlier, in June of 1961, their country had achieved its independence from the same country we'd won our independence from—Britain. We did it with guns. Theirs was peaceful.

I'd been invited into a dorm room to participate in a political discussion. The Kuwaitis were nice, well-dressed, and congenial. They weren't poor, disenfranchised camel drivers. They came from well-to-do families rich from oil revenues. The conversation, when I got there, was why they didn't like Americans. The one who spoke the most made it very clear: he didn't hate Jews, he hated Israel; he didn't hate us, but he hated the American government. He and his friends hated us because we were *over there* and because we were meddling in their affairs.

They said Europeans and Americans had moved in there and taken the best land and had moved the Arabs at gun-point into camps where they were now refugees. I didn't believe it for a minute. I knew our country would never stand for that. He likened what we had allowed happen to the Palestinians to what we did to the Indians. We took the Indians land and expected them to do nothing about it. Of course, from the time Europeans first set foot in the New World, there were four centuries of Indian wars. I felt uncomfortable when he pointed this out, but I didn't give in. I continued to argue with them. This was 40 years ago.

Over the past few weeks we keep hearing the question, *why? why? why?* did they do it? The *official* line is that they did it because they hate our freedoms and our democracy. Mortimer Zuckerman, Editor-in-Chief of *U.S. News and World Report*, refers to "...the so-called root causes of terrorism, alleged to be poverty and despair." This, despite the fact that many of the hijackers came from middle class

or wealthy families—and even Osama bin Laden is himself a multimillionaire.

But, while we're trying to figure out why they did it, is anyone listening to what *they're* saying? They keep telling us *why* again and again. But no matter how many times they say it, we keep trying to guess what their *real* reasons were.

Here's what they're saying since at least 1961 when I started college: They did it because we support Israel, because we meddle in their affairs, and because we're over there. (*It may have been Ken Burn's series on the Civil War where I heard this, but a Yankee soldier is reputed to have asked of a Rebel soldier, "You don't own any slaves, so why are you fighting?" The rebel's reply: "Because you're down here." Sound familiar?*)

Even our *friends* are trying to tell us why they did it. But when they do, we rebuke them. Saudi Prince Alwaleed bin Talal tried to give \$10 million to New York, but because he indicated that part of the reason the terrorists attacked us was because of our policies toward the Palestinians and suggested we change them, Mayor Giuliani of New York City turned the gift down saying, "I entirely reject that statement. There is no moral equivalent for this [terrorist] act. There is no justification for it. The people who did it lost any right to ask for justification for it when they slaughtered 4,000 or 5,000 innocent people."

Of course, the prince wasn't justifying the act. As a *friend*, who is willing to help out, he was telling us the reasons the terrorists did it. But for saying something we don't want to hear, we figuratively slapped him in the face.

There is not one politician in this country who is publicly willing to entertain the notion that the act was retribution for our foreign policy (though I wonder what they say privately). In fact, any suggestion that the attacks came about as a response to U.S. policy is met with immediate censure that borders on censorship. It's unpatriotic to suggest that perhaps the United States government helped bring this on. But the rest of the world knows this is true.

If you don't like what I'm saying, let me ask one more question: Why did we bomb the Taliban? Is it because they harbored the terrorists and we're after the terrorists themselves? If you said yes, fine. But that's not the reason according to Moslems around the world who are now rioting in protest against the United States. They have a different story.

Just as we insist on maintaining that September 11th was the result of the terrorists hating freedom and democracy, or because they're poor and in despair—even though *they're telling us why they did it*, according to Moslem mobs around the world September 11th has nothing to do with our retaliation. They're saying we're bombing Afghanistan because we hate Moslems.

Does that kind of denial sound familiar? It should. Δ

— John Silveira

Getting out of Dodge

10 Things I am doing to prepare for the move to the country

By Luke Lee

There are three kinds of people who read this magazine: those already living in the country, those actively preparing and planning to make the move to the country, and lastly those who fantasize about moving but will never actually do it. Unashamedly I am the second kind, the one who is actively planning the move and is doing a great deal about it. Here are some of the things I've done or am doing to make this transition possible someday.

1. Debt free

Yes, it is a dream for me and I believe it can become a reality one day. Just imagine moving to the country laden with debts: credit cards, mortgage, car loans, student loan, boat loan, RV loan—you get the picture. Anyone who hopes to move to

the country and still live like a city dweller with all this baggage is fooling himself. Even if he can make the move, it would neither be practical nor enjoyable. You've got to have a plan to rid yourself of these debts and begin to save.

Yes, it will take discipline and iron will, and yes it can be achieved. Here is something I read today while at a restaurant: "Happy is the man who makes sacrifices to fulfill his dreams." For sure there will be sacrifices and efforts; dreams don't come easily or cheaply. Don't get me wrong, I am not totally debt free. But I am working hard to achieve this end, say, in a few years. And this is how I started:

About five years ago when my wife and I started thinking about moving to the country someday, we were also in the position to buy our first house. Instead of buying a single family



Luke takes a break from building the foundation of the rental house to show it off to his daughter Abriel.



My contractor friend Bryan working on the water line. I'm moving the gravel to the garage to get ready for concrete, putting newly acquired skills to work.

home, we bought a triplex. While we lived there, the rental income from the other units nearly paid the entire mortgage each month. We were able to save my income and live on my wife's salary.

A year and a half later, we had saved enough to buy our second home. (We kept the triplex—the rental income pays all expenses, and we look forward to one day selling it, pocketing the appreciated value.) This time, however, we wanted to live in a single family home because we were expecting our first child. We had also decided that once the child was born my wife would quit her job. We bought a nice Cape Cod-style house just a few blocks from the triplex. We got it for a very reasonable price

because it had a very ugly kitchen with dreadful yellow linoleum, and we bought it directly from the owner. The kitchen became a good project for us, and now my wife loves her “dream kitchen.”

Two weeks after we moved in, our first child, Abriel, was born. Nine months later, we still had enough money left over to buy a fixer-upper. We got a special mortgage called 203K that financed the renovation costs and based the value on the completed projects. We renovated it and sold it a year later at a handsome profit. With the money from the fixer-upper I built a second house on our lot. We rent out this new house, and the income covers much of our mortgage.

It all sounds pretty easy, doesn't it. But let me assure you, there was more stress and headaches than you could imagine. But I still think it was worth it because it has brought me several steps closer to fulfilling my dream.

2. Acquire skills

By now you must think that I am quite an entrepreneur and a handy person. Believe me, I am neither. My wife thought I was crazy to take on such projects. You see, I was born and raised in Hong Kong. I had never worked with my hands until a few years ago. Hong Kong is a city of concrete; there was no need for me to learn to fix anything.

When I came to the States at the age of 18, I only spoke a smattering of English and had no skills whatsoever. But I figured that since I was here I might as well learn. When we first bought our fixer-upper, my wife was really doubtful as to how we were going to fix it. The house seemed to be in need of a lot of repairs but I thought it had a good bone to it. Yet I realized that I couldn't possibly do any of the repairs myself so I hired a friend to help. I didn't want to deal with con-

tractors, and more importantly I wanted to work alongside someone so I could learn.

For the next few months, we worked together over many week-

ends. I helped, I watched, and I asked questions. At times I felt like I was an idiot; I couldn't even do some of the simplest things. Toward the end of the remodeling, my friend bailed out and said he couldn't spend the weekends

wanted to sell it right away, but it didn't happen. Nobody was interested so we rented it out. During that nine-month period we had more tenants than I'd like to remember. I think it

“Failure to cut a 2x4 is detrimental to a man's self image, but eventually I figured out that the saw was partly responsible.”



Sheathing is done. View from the new backyard.

to work any longer. I was counting on him, and the 203k loan required all the work to be done soon. I still had to refinish the hardwood floor, paint the whole house inside and out, and do tons of little things.

So I wept. No, I did not. I took a week off work. I went to the rental place and rented a floor sander. I took it to the fixer house and did it. It took me several days to do it. I knew it wasn't a perfect job because the same friend later told me I did a poor job

must have been five. Well, being a landlord is another story.

As for the house I built on my lot, it was a much better experience for me, though it wasn't without trials. Again I hired another friend, who was a contractor, to build the house with me because I knew I still had so much to learn. I took three months off work (my second child was born and I took three months parental leave) and started building less than a week after Annika was born. We did most of the



Building a covered deck behind my house

work except plumbing, electrical, grading, and a few others. Overall, the experience was very positive and I learned quite a bit about carpentry work.

But some of the nightmares included dealing with the truss company and the electrical contractor. Briefly, the truss company kept sending us wrong trusses. The big truck roared back three times to deliver the correct trusses. At the end, the owner of the truss company refused to give us some of the engineerings for the trusses until we paid in full. But we insisted that the trusses be approved by the city inspector first because of some of the changes the truss company had made. Stalemate. The city inspector came and didn't question the trusses, the truss company burned to the ground the next day, we paid in full. The end of the truss story and no, we didn't do it.

As for the electrical work, it was a greater nightmare for us. We did most of the wiring ourselves thinking that we could do it without an electrician.

The city came and inspected and demanded that it be done by an electrical contractor. We had no choice but to hire one. It was summer time and we had to scramble to find one. On top of that, the city also demanded a 400-amp meter base because now we have two houses on one large lot.

It ended up costing us over \$6000. At the rate of \$60 an hour, it took the electrician a whole week to get the wiring done. My wife kept commenting that the electrician parked his van far away instead of on the driveway in front of the house; he kept walking back and forth to this van the whole day.

Toward the end, the electrician came back to do a little more finish work. When we got a bill for those four or five hours of work, I looked at it carefully and realized that the hourly rate was no longer \$60 but \$65. I called the owner of the company, who turned out to also be a city commissioner of the city of Gresham. He then told me that he had decided to give his hard working guy a raise so he went ahead and charged me \$5 more an hour—without my knowledge or consent. Typical politician,

isn't it? I raised a stink and got him to lower it back to \$60.

Through it all, I learned that if you have determination, you can accomplish many things, but not everything. After building the house along with my friend, I felt confident enough to tackle many projects on my own, including building a covered porch, deck, fences, and many other projects.

3. Acquire tools

Along with acquiring skills, invariably you will acquire tools, and lots of them. When I first began to be interested in tools, I scoured garage sales and bought many cheap tools. But most of them were too cheap to be of any good. Refuse the temptation to buy everything you see at garage sales. Poor quality tools will only add frustration as you tackle a project.

What about power tools? Yes, they are handy but they are also expensive. The first power tool I bought was a crosscut saw from a discount warehouse and it only cost me \$30. I thought it was a good deal because on the box it boasted of all these features and horsepower. But when I used it the first time, I wasn't amused. The saw kept binding on the 2 x 4. I knew



Wrestling with a tree stump while excavating for the new rental house

I wasn't a skilled craftsman yet, but the saw wasn't helping either. Failure to cut a 2 x 4 is detrimental to a man's self image, but eventually I figured out that the saw was partly responsible.

A few months later, strolling down the aisles at Sears, I saw this nice belt sander and it was made completely out of plastic. I couldn't resist and

A few months ago I was at a garage sale and this guy had two boxes of woodworking magazines for sale. There had to be over 200 magazines in those two boxes. I offered him \$10 for each box and he insisted on \$15. While I was thinking about it one of the boxes sold. I should have bought them right away. I bought the remaining box and two brand new wood-

would like to have a big garden. Realizing that there is so much to learn, I need to start somewhere, and the little patch of garden may as well be the place.

6. Explore options

Once I move to the country, I know I won't be holding a conventional city job. But somehow I still need to make a living. There are many options out there and each holds a different promise. When I hired the guy to do the grading work for my house, I really liked his trackhoe. What if I buy a machine like this, grade the land with it, and use it to earn a living. That may work.

A dear friend of mine, Frank Ferguson, owns a portable sawmill. I have helped him several times to use the mill to cut lumber for people. He makes a decent living with the mill. Not a bad idea.

What about buying a trailer and driving it to commercial or industrial areas to serve hot Chinese food. Since I am such a wonderful Chinese cook (everybody tells me so), I should take advantage of my skill. I also thought of growing a big organic garden and have it u-pick.

What about buying and fixing up houses and reselling them. Or maybe starting a magazine and be my own publisher (bad idea, Dave wouldn't like it). How about a bed and breakfast, or having people vacation at my country home and charging a fee for it. Well, I am not sure which one I will try but I am sure I will try some of them.

7. Find the place

This is a tough one for me. Both my wife and I came from overseas and none of our relatives live in the States. We have lived in Portland, Oregon for a long time and often feel that this isn't the best place for raising a family. Land around here is exorbitant and the weather is quite a bit too wet for me. We've been to

"I was particularly eager for the seeds to germinate. I looked at them so much that my wife was accusing me of digging them up to inspect the seeds to see if they were doing something."

bought it for \$35, thinking that I could sure use a sander. After using it a few times, I quickly sold the sander and the crosscut saw in my own garage sales.

From then on, the adage stuck with me when I considered buying tools: "You get what you pay for." Yes, I still buy many tools from garage sales and private parties, but I try to stick with name brands such as Porter Cable, Milwaukee, Dewalt, Bosch, and other well known reliable tools. If you don't, then your tools will come back to haunt you and I can almost hear you swear, "What a piece of junk this is."

4. Read

Over the last few years I have checked out many how-to books from the library and have bought many useful books. Particularly I enjoy this magazine (Dave told me to say it), Readers' Digest's *Back to Basics* and *Do-it-Yourself Manual*, Time Life's *Complete Fix-it-Yourself*, Wills H. Wagner's *Modern Carpentry*, and Orthos's *Basic Wiring Techniques*. These are just some of my favorites. Check them out, browse through them. There is a lot of reading material out there and much of it is useful.

working books for a dollar each. One of the books was on how to build traditional cabinets; I had just checked it out from the library recently and noticed the original price of \$15. Keep looking and reading. Having a good collection of how-to books will be an integral part of your move to the country.

5. Start a garden

I started a garden about a month ago and it was the first for me. A friend came over one Saturday with a tiller and tilled up a patch of grass in a corner of my backyard. We then went to a nursery and picked up some tomato plants, zucchini, eggplant, and peppers. I also bought some bush beans, corn, and snow pea seeds. We fertilized the soil and my friend showed me how to plant them. It wasn't quite as bad as I thought. I kept the soil moist and most of the plants have grown much since.

Every day I go out in the yard to inspect the plants. I was particularly eager for the seeds to germinate. I looked at them so much that my wife was accusing me of digging them up to inspect the seeds to see if they were doing something. No, I didn't do it but the idea was very tempting. I know when I live in the country I

Idaho a few times and like it there. In a few months we will take a trip to Idaho and parts of Montana. I hope this trip will give us a better idea of where we'd like to move.

What I have also done is to surf the Internet about the states or towns I am interested in. But the net is too overwhelming, it has too much infor-

to keep talking to people who have lived in different places. Somewhere out there a place is waiting for me, and I want to be ready once I find it.

8. What is important

I need to keep reminding myself why I want to move to the country. Certainly the hopes and dreams of a

"The beautiful sunset over the pond, the ripening garden, the brilliant hues of wildflowers on the hillside, the simple yet elegant farmhouse with wraparound porch. All these are wonderful and should be nurtured because they motivate us to move forward."

mation, and it's hard to narrow things down. I have also looked at books about different states but most of the information is for tourism and they don't give the whole picture of what a town is about. I guess I will just have

carefree life enjoying nature, hunting, fishing, and all those things. But these alone are not good enough reasons. The most important reason for me is to raise my family in an environment where my children will grow up appreciating and learning what life has to offer. I want to homeschool them, to expose them to good literature, and teach them to be self-reliant. I want to create an atmosphere where my children will be free from the junks of the world. I don't want the television, the government, and for that matter, the public schools to raise my kids. They are my children and I am solely responsible for their upbringing.

9. Be realistic

I often get caught up with the excitement of someday moving to the country that I become all too idealistic. I conjure up all these wonderful mental pictures in my mind and often get lost in them. The beautiful sunset over the pond, the ripening garden, the brilliant hues of wildflowers on the hillside, the simple yet elegant farmhouse with wraparound porch. All these are wonderful and should be nurtured because they motivate us to move forward.

But along with these dreams and aspirations, there will be tedious, back breaking work and obstacles that at times seem insurmountable. Every dream has its costs if it is to become true. Be realistic and stay focused so you won't be blown away by the enormous task that lies ahead.

10. Money

It is not how much money you make, rather it is how little you need to spend. If I were to move to the country tomorrow, it would mean that I would have to give up my decent paying city job. Am I ready for that? I will be when I have enough money to buy the land and build my house on it. How dreadful it would be to live in the country and still have to work like city folk. Oh, by the way, did I tell you I hate my job? I often jokingly tell my friends that my career goal is not to have a career. But it isn't a joke!

This is what I want when I move to the country: I want to be able to build my house from scratch, everything from foundation to kitchen cabinets. And I want to use the lumber harvested from my land to build this house that I am going to live in for the rest of my life. I want to raise most of the food for my family. It means having a big garden and various livestock.

Yes, that's how I like it and here lies the secret of living in the country. If you save enough money to buy your land and build your house with the trees on your land, and if you raise most of your food stuff, then and only then does it mean that you don't have to earn a living like city folk. You don't have to work eight hours a day and commute every day. It means you are your own boss because your livelihood is not dependent on your employment. It depends solely on you. That's right, no debt, build your house, raise your own food, and the rest is easy—I mean, easier. Δ

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"Dealer inquiries welcome"

biological & chemical terrorism

By Dave Duffy

More than 5,000 American civilians lay entombed in the World Trade Center wreckage and more than 20,000 are taking antibiotics to fight off anthrax. America wages war against terrorists with cells in 60 nations. The enemy is willing to die in order to kill us, and they may have access to biological and chemical weapons.

How much danger are we in? Can they really unleash plagues of genetically altered bacteria and viruses among us, for which there are no vaccinations or treatments? Will they

attack us with a nerve gas that can kill thousands of people in minutes?

No one has definite answers to these questions, but the military and the civilian medical establishment are both gearing up to treat biological and chemical casualties. The American Medical Association website (ama-assn.org) is packed with the latest information for physicians on how to treat biological and chemical patients.

But a lot of perspective is needed when trying to assess the actual danger we are in. It is not as great as the constant news coverage of anthrax, for example, would indicate. But it is *real*. In fact, one could argue that whoever first mailed anthrax through

the U.S. mail did us a favor as a nation, because at long last we are taking seriously a threat that has existed for years.

Perspective

First the perspective:

If America was at war with a sophisticated military power such as the former Soviet Union, we *could* be attacked along the frightening scenarios mentioned above. The Soviets had hundreds of tons of genetically altered anthrax that even their own vaccine appeared defenseless against, they had hundreds of tons of nerve gas that could kill thousands of people in minutes, and they had the missile means to deliver both to our

shore. In fact, Dr. Valdimir Paschenick, a defector from the secret Soviet biological warfare program of the 1980s, told Western intelligence that the Soviet's view of a possible World War III included biological and chemical-tipped missiles being lobbed into the United States.

But we have not been attacked by a sophisticated state; we have been attacked by terrorists who spend a lot of their time living in caves. Terrorists may be able to catch us by surprise and hijack planes and drive them into buildings, and they may be able to grow batches of anthrax bacteria and send them through the mail to kill a few unsuspecting people, but actually waging biological or chemical war on us is quite another matter.

Producing germs and being able to disseminate them widely among a civilian population requires hundreds of millions of dollars of research and a country with a large scientific infrastructure. Terrorists do not have that combination, nor do the third world countries who support terrorists and are reportedly attempting to develop biological weapons.

Iraq, for example, had the hundreds of millions of dollars and they made a concerted effort to develop anthrax, botulinum toxin, and other biological agents into weapons. They succeeded only in developing a liquid form of anthrax, which they put in the warheads of a few SCUD missiles but never used, because even Saddam Hussein realized they were totally ineffective as weapons.

The only countries to have succeeded in developing biological agents as weapons have been the former Soviet Union and the United States, and it is not at all clear just how effective those bioweapons would be if used.

Anthrax

Let's take anthrax as an example of just how difficult it is to turn a bacteria into a weapon. Anthrax is a good example because it is considered by

military analysts as one of the most promising bacterial candidates to be weaponized. It is relatively easy to grow, stable, and has a good ability to infect people. Cutaneous (through the skin) anthrax is 20% fatal if untreated, and untreated inhalation anthrax is 90% fatal.

Both the making of the bacteria and the delivering of it successfully to the intended target must be considered together because there is no point in making a germ unless you can deliver it to targets. Nature is full of terrifying bacteria and viruses, but they don't always reach humans.

Anthrax lives in the ground in rural areas and typically infects only grazing animals because they spend so much of their time with their noses in the ground. A few anthrax spores cannot create an infection in humans; it takes about 10,000 or more. Wool sorters often inhale small quantities of anthrax spores, but do not get infected.

To be used as a weapon, anthrax spores must be converted to a dry powder one to five microns in size so it can be inhaled. It usually attacks the lungs, but it can also enter the body through cuts or undercooked meat. In a bad year about 10,000 people worldwide get anthrax, usually from tainted meat in third world countries.

The dry powder is necessary so the anthrax can stay in the air to be inhaled. If wet it will simply fall to the ground. Creating the powder is technically very difficult, requiring washing the spores in large, expensive centrifuges, then drying it by spraying a mist into a vacuum. It's expensive, technically demanding, and requires a lot of sophisticated equipment with several PhDs guiding the process.

Once the powder is made and disseminated, presumably through some sort of sophisticated aerosol device (crop duster nozzles won't work) it still needs the help of wind to keep it

"Compounding the concern is that the Soviets may have made a genetically altered small-pox... The entire thrust of the Soviets' biological warfare program, according to Dr. Alibek, was to develop agents 'for which there was no prevention and no cure.'"

from falling to the ground. If it falls to the ground it can't be inhaled. But the wind will also rapidly spread the powder too thin so most of the intended victims would not inhale enough to cause infection.

An aerosol attack with a large quantity of anthrax, which terrorists would probably not be able to do, may kill a few hundred people but not the hundreds of thousands some media people are suggesting. Opening an envelope full of the powder would be another matter. There may be millions of spores present so it would be easier to inhale the 10,000 or so necessary for infection to occur.

Once someone is infected, anthrax is also not contagious from human to human, and antibiotics are effective against it.

It is important to realize the difference between terrorists attacking us with biological weapons and being able to kill large numbers of people, and terrorists scaring the hell out of us by sending anthrax germs through the mail, or disseminating it in some other inept way, and killing a few unfortunate people. Mailed anthrax has a tremendous terrorizing effect, but that is probably the only effect the terrorists can achieve.

Even if the terrorists managed to somehow get hold of a quantity of the former Soviet Union's purported supply of genetically altered anthrax, against which there is no vaccine or antibiotic, they probably could not use it effectively except as a terror weapon. It does not spray well through nozzles, as bacteria likes to clump together and clog up the nozzles.

Some of the anthrax sent through the U.S. mail was contained in a powder, which may mean it came from the Soviet Union or the United States military anthrax stocks, since they are the only countries capable of making anthrax into a powder. The fact that the anthrax, when caught in time, apparently responded to antibiotics

tends to indicate it may have come from the U.S. stocks. But that's only my speculation.

Living with terrorists and other nuts who set about to infect us with disease may be something we must learn to live with, at least until these people realize they can't do a lot of damage and we become immune to the terror aspect of it.

While doing research for this article, I encountered a lot of information in the mass media that talked about the terrible lethality of a lot of these disease agents. For example, botulism toxin, which some countries are developing as an agent and which folks can encounter while eating improperly canned food, is pound for pound the most toxic substance on earth. It sounds scary, and it is meant to be for the sake of readership, but it really has no relevance when you are talking about weaponizing diseases. As I said before, Nature is full of horrifying diseases, but if they can't get to you easily who cares. When we can food, we do so under strict rules so as to guard against botulism, just as when we eat in restaurants we avoid those that operate under third world conditions. We are so used to being conscious of cleanliness in America to safeguard our health—unlike many third world countries where diseases often run rampant—that we forget Nature has many diseases and toxins all around us.

Influenza kills about 20,000 Americans in a typical year, but most of us manage to carry on our lives in spite of that terrifying fact. My own daughter has asthma so is in a high risk group for influenza, and she doesn't get a flu shot because it gives her the flu. So she is vulnerable, but both she and I do not walk around terrified. Life has its risks.

This is not the first time bungling terrorists will try to attack us with disease, and it won't be the last. As recently as 1984, the Bhagwan Shree

Rajneesh cult had a beef with local officials in The Dalles, Oregon. They grew salmonella typhimurium in a laboratory at their Oregon ranch and used it to contaminate salad bars in four local restaurants. No one died, but nearly 800 people became ill. The culprits were all jailed for a few years, then deported.

Smallpox

Now that we're feeling a little more secure against anthrax and bacteria, and a few other germs, there *is* something to worry about. It is viruses. Many are contagious through the air, or from human to human. In many cases, one infected person can infect 10 or 20 more very quickly, so infections can multiply rapidly.

One virus in particular is worrisome—smallpox. Smallpox is a very contagious virus that is fatal in 30% of cases. Most people my age (57) were vaccinated against smallpox when children, but vaccinations stopped in 1977 when the disease was eradicated. The World Health Organization decided that only two laboratories should possess the eradicated smallpox: one in the former Soviet Union and one in the United States.

The former Soviet Union is believed to have developed smallpox as a biological weapon in its secret biological weapons program of the 1980s. In 1992, amidst the economic ruins of what had been the Soviet Union, Boris Yeltsin admitted the existence of the secret program and promptly discontinued it. Some 60,000 scientists and technicians who had become expert at developing biological weapons during the 20-year existence of the secret program were thrown out of work. The fear is that some of them may have sold their expertise, or perhaps samples of the smallpox, to other nations who wanted to pursue biological warfare research.

The United States still has some smallpox vaccine (15 million doses), but it is at least 25 years old and we are not sure how viable it is. It could take two to three years to develop a new vaccine. As for my vaccination, it may still offer some protection against a smallpox strain that was not genetically altered, but it has most assuredly lost a lot of its effectiveness in the 50 odd years since I got it.

Compounding the concern is that the Soviets may have made a genetically altered smallpox. Dr. Ken Alibek, former deputy chief of Biopreparat, the civilian arm of the Soviet Union's secret biological weapons program, stated recently that the Soviets had been working to genetically alter the smallpox virus, and had explored combining it with Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis and with the Ebola virus.

The entire thrust of the Soviets' biological warfare program, according to Dr. Alibek, was to develop agents "for which there was no prevention and no cure," which was in sharp contrast to the U.S. program which created vaccines and treatments for each agent studied.

The danger is that suicidal terrorists, if they were able to get hold of some of the smallpox, will infect themselves and walk among us in crowded cities. Once infected, people are contagious for 7 to 10 days. Even smallpox that has not been genetically altered is still a virus, and viruses do not respond to antibiotics.

The Soviet breakup

Since the ending of the Soviet Union's biological program, not all of their biological stocks have been accounted for. The Soviets amassed hundreds of tons of anthrax, smallpox, tularemia, botulinum toxin, and a host of other diseases and toxins. Have terrorists bought some from unemployed biowarfare scientists desperate for money?

Another concern is the way the Soviets disposed of their biological weapons. For example, in 1988 they secretly buried tons of supposedly deactivated anthrax spores on the remote island Vozrozhdeniye (Renaissance Island) in the Aral Sea in Uzbekistan, just north of Afghanistan. A subsequent ill-thought-out irrigation project has drained 75% of the water from the Aral Sea so that the island can now be reached by land.

The United States is working with Uzbekistan to secure the anthrax. Analysis has determined that 6 of the 11 burial sites on the island contain live anthrax spores. This island was also used by the Soviets to test other germ warfare agents, such as smallpox, tularemia, plague, Q-fever, typhus, brucellosis, glanders, Venezuelan Equine encephalitis, and botulism toxin. Uzbekistan is also home to former Soviet chemical weapons plants.

Chemical weapons

Chemical agents, including some nerve agents, are much easier to make than biological weapons, thus earning them the reputation as "the poor man's atom bomb." Iraq manufactured several nerve agents, which it used with deadly effect against Iranians in their 1980s war, and again against its own people, the Kurds, in 1988.

Chemical agents are particularly frightening because many of them can be made with chemicals that are readily available to terrorists. They can be made in a home laboratory, and many of them can be disseminated fairly easily.

The agents come in several varieties: **choking agents** like the chlorine and phosgene used in World War I; **vesicants (blister agents)**, like mustard and lewisite; **nerve agents**, which are closely related to the insecticides and pesticides we use around the house and garden; and **blood**

agents like cyanide, which is used in many manufacturing processes and is always being transported on our nation's highways.

The most deadly chemical agents are the nerve agents, which include VX, GF, soman, sarin, and tabun. They may also be the most likely choices as terrorist weapons. They are chemically similar to pesticides, and like pesticides they can be disseminated through spraying devices such as those on crop dusters.

Many of us are familiar with the Japanese cult, Aum Shinrikyo, which in 1995 released sarin gas, a nerve agent, in the Tokyo subway system, killing 12 people and injuring 5,500. The cult was also implicated in a sarin gas attack that occurred in 1994 in Matsumoto, Japan, killing 7 and injuring 200. The cult had produced an impure form of sarin that was not nearly as lethal as military grade. The same cult was unsuccessful at developing a successful biological agent, even though it had six laboratories and a budget of \$300 million.

Some nerve agents, such as VX, are at least 10 times more powerful than sarin, and it is known that some countries that are sympathetic to terrorists possess it. In the case of VX, a single drop on the skin can kill a person.

Nerve agents are acetylcholinesterase inhibitors and interfere with the nervous system's ability to control muscles, causing muscles to spasm. They are absorbed through the respiratory tract or skin, and symptoms include chest tightness, pinpoint pupils, shortness of breath, drooling, sweating, vomiting, stomach cramps, involuntary defecation and urination, and extreme muscle twitching and seizures. It is very nasty stuff.

In the Persian Gulf War, Hussein's possession of nerve agent, and his suspected possession of biological weapons, caused the U.S. to arm troops with chemical defense kits and immunize them against anthrax and botulinum toxin. The U.S. said he

never used the agent, but some veterans groups claim that Gulf War Illness (GWI) exhibits symptoms that are consistent with nerve agent poisoning.

Possible methods of delivery by terrorists would be to modify aircraft with tanks designed to spray the agent. Iraq was working to develop such a method in 1990, according to CIA reports. An aerosol system mounted on a remotely controlled Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) is another method.

The Aum Shinrikyo cult that attacked the Tokyo subway possessed a Russian helicopter and two radio-controlled drone aircraft that could have been modified to spray chemical agent over a city. The cult used exploding canisters to distribute their nerve agent in the subway system.

Tanks mounted under a car and crop dusters are obvious ways to deliver nerve agents. A crop dusting manual was found among the belongings of Zacarias Moussaoui, a material witness detained by the FBI as having links with the terrorists who destroyed the World Trade Center towers. Moussaoui had also sought to take flying lessons.

Most nerve agents tend to dissipate fairly quickly, but VX agent was designed to be sticky and so stays on a surface for a long time, making an area unusable. It is mainly absorbed through the skin, while other nerve agents are mainly absorbed through inhalation.

When I was attending CBR Warfare School in the Army 35 years ago, atropine injected into the thigh was the life saving antidote against nerve agent. That is still the antidote today, but rapid decontamination is also critical for survival. In many countries, military personnel carry an auto-injector containing atropine and pralidoxime chloride. Pretreatment to withstand an attack is also available to the military in the form of pills that lessen the effect of the nerve agent.

Recovery from nerve agent takes about two weeks, but long-term effects that include mental disorders are possible. As I said, this is very nasty stuff.

The "terror" aspect

During the Persian Gulf War in 1991, 39 Iraqi SCUD missiles reached Israel. Even though none carried the nerve agent anticipated, 230 Israelis were treated for atropine overdoses, and an additional 544 people were hospitalized for anxiety. Just the threat of attack by a biological or chemical agent is intimidating to civilian populations, and an actual attack with its ensuing panic has the potential to cause major disruptions in society.

During the Cold War we lived under the specter of sudden nuclear annihilation; now we live under the specter of imagined annihilation by germs we cannot see or smell, and chemicals that our enemy can make in the neighbor's bathtub.

At least 17 countries, some of whom sponsor terrorists, currently have biological and/or chemical weapons programs. They include Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Cuba,

Vietnam, Laos, Bulgaria, India, North Korea, South Korea, Vietnam, Russia, China, Taiwan, and Israel.

There are hundreds of bacteria, viruses, and toxins that could be used to attack people, but the military has chosen to develop only a handful because of they meet criteria involving ease of production, stability, and ability to infect. They include anthrax, smallpox, plague, cholera, Venezuelan equine encephalitis, Q fever, brucellosis, tularemia, staphylococcal enterotoxins, ricin toxin, and botulinum toxin. There are also many harmful and deadly chemicals being developed.

Some American officials have long realized that the nerve agent attacks in Japan's subway could just as easily have occurred in any subway system in America, and some analysts have been trying to warn us that a terrorist biological attack on America was just as possible. Few people listened to them until now.

America is in a new type of war with terrorists, with part of the battlefield on our own shore. They can certainly inflict casualties upon us by surreptitiously inserting diseases in American society, and by surreptitiously releasing chemical agents that can harm, even kill us. But they cannot do it with effectiveness, especially in light of a now alert America.

For the initial stages of this new type of warfare, there will be a learning curve. But this is not the Middle Ages when plagues of various sorts visited generation after generation and went unchecked. We now have the science to quickly ascertain any threat and to develop preventive measures.

The learning curve will involve some casualties but mostly anxiety because we won't know when or where or how the terrorists will strike. Our loyal ally Britain has lived with that anxiety for decades at the hands of IRA terrorists. Now we have even more in common with them. Δ

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The history of Chemical & biological warfare

The Germans are given credit for introducing both chemical and biological weapons into modern warfare during World War I.

Modern chemical warfare began April 22, 1915 near Ypres, Belgium, when the Germans released 160 tons of chlorine gas from 6,000 pressurized cylinders into the wind blowing toward the Allies. The gas choked to death 5,000 Allied troops. They repeated the attack two days later.

The Germans introduced Phosgene, which was 10 times more deadly than the chlorine gas, in 1915, and mustard and cyanide later in the war. Before the war was over, both sides had released 113,000 tons of chemicals, killing 92,000 and wounding 1.2 million.

Modern biological warfare was introduced as an antianimal weapon in 1915 by an American-educated surgeon and German agent who grew anthrax and glanders in his Maryland home laboratory, then passed them on to another German agent who inoculated horses bound for the Allies.

After the war the combatant nations signed the Geneva protocol, which barred both gas and bacteriological warfare. During World War II, no combatant used chemical or biological agent on the battlefield, even though the Germans by then had developed nerve agents that were 15 to 100 times more potent than the World War I agents. (There is some evidence that the Japanese may have released plague-infected rats in China that killed several thousand civilians.)

Even though the agents were not used on World War II battlefields, the Germans did murder millions of civilians using Zyklon-B and other chemicals. Allied nations seized the German chemical weapons after the war and started their own programs. Most of the chemical weapons manufacturing plants were taken by the Russians to Volgograd.

In 1952, in England, during research on chemical agents being developed from insecticides, a new nerve agent many times more lethal than others was discovered. Codenamed VX, the United States took over the large-scale production of it from 1961 to 1968 in Dugway, Utah. In one accident at the plant, a cloud of the agent escaped and killed more than 6,000 nearby sheep.

In the 1960s and early 70s in Vietnam, chemical agents called "Agent Orange," "Agent Purple," "Agent Blue," and "Agent White" were used by the United States to defoliate the jungle surrounding the enemy, and unconfirmed human casualties were reported.

In 1969 President Nixon unilaterally discontinued America's biological weapons program and destroyed its stockpiles.

In 1972 the Biological Weapons Convention outlawed biological weapons, and in 1973 the Chemical Weapons Convention outlawed chemical weapons. The Soviets, however, continued to operate a secret biological weapons program employing 60,000 people.

In 1979 an accident at a secret Soviet biological plant in Sverdlovsk (now called Ekaterinburg), Russia, caused at least 66 people living downwind from the plant to die of inhalation anthrax. In 1992 Boris Yeltsin admitted the existence of the secret program and discontinued it.

During the 1970s there were allegations that chemical agents were used in Laos against the Hmong tribesman who had supported the United States during the Vietnam War.

During the Arab-Israeli War of 1973, no chemical agents were used but captured Egyptian soldiers carried an antidote to the nerve agent soman.

There were allegations in the late 1970s and 1980s that a biological agent, tentatively identified as a myco-

toxin produced from a fungi, was used in Kampuchea, Cambodia.

During the 1980s in Afghanistan, there were frequent allegations that the Soviets were using chemical agents against Afghan rebels.

Also during the 1980s, during the eight-year Iran-Iraq War, it was confirmed that two types of chemical agents, the blister agent mustard and the nerve agent tabun, had been used by Iraq against Iran. Many Iranians were evacuated to Europe for treatment.

In 1988 it was also confirmed that Iraq had used nerve agents, mustard, and cyanide against Kurdish civilians when they bombed the village of Halabja in northern Iraq.

Although the U.S. says Iraq did not use chemical agents in the Persian Gulf War against Coalition Forces, some attribute "Gulf War Illness" to the possible use of them.

The use of chemical and biological warfare goes way back in history: Hannibal hurled poisonous snakes onto ships at Eurymedon in 190 BC. In 1346 DeMussis, a Mongol, catapulted bodies infected with bubonic plague into Kaffa, a seaport on the Black Sea in Russia. The British gave New England Indians smallpox-infected blankets in 1763. Even in America's Civil War, there were incidents of selling smallpox-infected clothing to unsuspecting Union soldiers.

Historical occurrences are numerous: Water wells have been poisoned by leaving dead bodies in them, arrows were dipped in blood and manure and decomposing bodies, wine was tainted with leprosy patients' blood, and artillery shells were filled with the saliva of rabid dogs.

Hurling plague-infected bodies at the enemy was a tactic used more than once in history's wars, and plague is still considered by the military as a good candidate for a modern biological warfare agent. Δ

Living the outlaw life:

Freedom tomorrow By Claire Wolfe

How can we keep our freedom in this time of catastrophe? The short answer is: We can't. Crises, real or concocted, are the best friends big government has. "Emergency measures," always broader than necessary to begin with, become permanent fixtures. (How do you like that payroll withholding tax you're still paying each week to help win World War II?)

A few of the most blatant austerity policies or constitutional abuses are rolled back at the end of a crisis; but the 90 percent of new laws, regulations, and agencies that people have learned to tolerate remain...and remain. And let's not talk about "sunset clauses" that can be revoked in an instant. I'll laugh so hard I'll fry my keyboard spitting tea into it.

The catastrophe that struck us on September 11, 2001 was horrifyingly, undeniably real. The rubble has barely quit smoking. Anthrax in our mailboxes hasn't improved our sense of security. So a nation that had been on the verge of realizing that government was the problem now heralds government as The Solution.

Willingly, we rally 'round our politicians. And yes, compared with Osama, or Saddam, or whoever else might be lurking behind those hijackings and funny envelopes, even Gary Condit looks like a good guy. Protecting our nation and striking back take priority.

But in rallying 'round, we lose freedom. Not because the terrorists took it. Not because it's necessary to give up freedom to attain security. Far from it. But because every cynical pol and bureaucrat from city hall to the Capitol dome knows exactly how to use our patriotic sentiments and our fears to further his agenda. So we end up with unconstitutional sneak-and-peak warrants, Internet surveillance without a court order, wiretaps on the innocent, criminalization of dissent, ad infinitum.

It's an old story. It's happened in every crisis since the War Between the States. Government promises to protect us. We say, "Take anything, do anything For The Cause." Then when those measures fail to make us safe, we say, "Take more, do more. Just make us feel better." (Does anybody recall how much freedom we gave up merely five years ago when we allowed Congress to pass *The Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996* after the Oklahoma City bombing? That law, which politicians swore would protect us against mass destruction, has been

used to lock innocent foreign nationals up literally for years without charges. In one case the U.S. Forest Service slyly used it to deprive a Colorado woman, Dianna Luppi, of her home. But how many acts of terrorism did it prevent on 9-11 or thereafter? How safe did it make you or your nation?)

Thing is, it truly isn't necessary to give up freedom to combat terrorism. On the contrary, some of the most effective ways we could fight terrorism would be with more, not less freedom. For starters, forget about taking away our nail clippers at the airport; let us carry .45s loaded with Glaser Safety Slugs and see how many terrorists dare cross entire planeloads of armed-and-ready passengers.

We could return to being a limited, constitutional republic, dealing peacefully with all nations and not routinely playing policeman or bossy mother to any.

As Rep. Ron Paul suggested, Congress could even use its constitutional authority to issue letters of marque and reprisal. That would turn privateers loose, under strict rules of conduct, to hunt down and deal with terrorists. Which is not as farfetched as it sounds. Ross Perot did it when he snatched hostage employees out of Iran, and privateers routinely played a part in early U.S. wars. That might be an effective way of striking directly at the evildoers (a thing that righteously needs doing) without murdering already long-suffering civilians, destroying their cities, opening the U.S. to further attacks from enraged people, and saddling ourselves with an ever-more expensive standing army.

But these things aren't likely to happen.

So what do we do? Well, at this moment we can hope to shout down some of the most oppressive (and ineffective) plans of power seekers—like the one Larry "Mr. National ID" Ellison has been peddling to Dianne Feinstein, John Ashcroft, and the media. The CEO of the giant database maker Oracle Corporation wants—for purely altruistic reasons, you can be sure—to impose upon us biometric smart cards linked to a database containing our "places of work, amounts and sources of income, assets, purchases, travel destinations, and more." Those are his own words. (Can you tell me how the feds can "make America safer" by having instant access to your purchases of duck decoys, cell phones, or Preparation H? Or by knowing that you make \$29,934.56 per year—not counting the undeclared \$100 your grandma gave you for Christmas and the \$213.25 you made at that unlicensed garage sale?)

Maybe, if we're really lucky and our legislators are fearful enough of our wrath—as they should be—we can forestall the very worst that they and their corporate panderers can do.

But face it, we're losers. Freedom's a loser. At least for the time being. Nobody but the usual handful of nuts wants it, and even some of freedom's erstwhile pals have backpedaled, compromised, and started sounding like the people they hated three months ago.

Still, we can't give up the fight. Those of us who value freedom—truly value it—must go on making noise, demanding serious reductions in government reach and power, reminding politicians and everyone else that an America without freedom isn't really America. And above all, we'll go on living our lives like people who expect and deserve freedom.

Laying the groundwork for freedom

We may not be able to keep freedom now, let alone win back in our lifetimes any that we lost during the late, unlamented Century of Government. But we can lay the groundwork for winning it back in the future. Even if that means our children's or our grandchildren's future, not our own.

Here's how:

1. Understand it's not going to be easy. We're not going to win freedom back by sending in a handful of contributions to the ACLU, the NRA, or the Free Congress Foundation, raging at our representatives, or waving a picket sign a couple of times a year. This is life. This is something we do to the marrow of our bones or not at all. Pledge yourself to it or get out of the way.

2. Stay alive for a starter. Prepare to take care of yourself and family in an emergency. I'll leave the specifics of food storage, water, medicines, and such to other *Backwoods Home* writers, in this issue and in *BHM's Emergency Preparedness and Survival Guide*. But the main thing is, you can't fight effectively for freedom if you're scrambling for groceries and water. And you can't legitimately call yourself a freedom fighter if you're begging the government for the basics you need to stay alive. (I think, and I hope, that most *BHM* readers are way ahead of me on this one.)

3. Know the *Bill of Rights*. For Americans, the distilled essence of individual liberty and national freedom is found in 10 brief articles. Those articles certainly don't say all there is to say about liberty. But the *Bill of Rights* gives us a set of fundamental "talking points" and lines in the sand. It gives us a meme—an "idea gene"—to plant in the American culture. We must promote—and promote, and promote—what Aaron Zelman of Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership (JPFO) calls *A Bill of Rights Culture*.

This means, among other things, that we need to understand the historic and contemporary relevance of the *Bill of Rights* and convey them to others. Fortunately, that doesn't have to be hard. Although there are scholarly books on the subject (a good one is Akhil Reed Amar's *The Bill of Rights: Creation and Reconstruction*), there's also one simple booklet that contains more education and supporting facts in one tiny handful than anything else I know. The booklet is called *It's Common Sense to Use Our Bill of Rights* by attorney Richard W. Stevens. An illustrated dialog, it's aimed at intelligent children or adults, and it's cheap enough to buy by the bushel and hand out at town meetings, churches, gun stores, schools, or wherever. You can get it at <http://www.jpfo.org/gpjack3.htm> or by calling (262) 673-9745.

Everything else that follows is another way of creating a true *Bill of Rights Culture*—one that's not just on paper but in real life.

4. Defend for others the rights you want to keep. If we want the U.S. to be a land committed to individual rights, we have to be willing to extend to everyone the rights and freedoms we want for ourselves. When we shrug at injustice delivered to some inner-city kid, some "rag-head," or some "enviro-whacko" (or some "gun nut" if we happen to be in a different quadrant of the political spectrum), we're consenting to tyranny. Tyranny nearly always starts by targeting a group of political opponents or social "undesirables" (often in the name of "a war on X" or "the crisis of Y"). Once accepted by the public, it engulfs whole populations.

5. Resist the appeal of sweeping political "solutions." If a political solution to a problem appeals to your gut, run it through your head first. Ask yourself: Is this the most targeted possible approach to the problem? Does this have a greater effect on the innocent and law-abiding than on the guilty? What are the long-term consequences of doing this?

It's always easy for us to see the unjust, catastrophic nature of policies our political opponents promote. We may perceive instantly that banning guns won't stop criminals from getting them. We may understand that allowing the FBI to surveil the entire Internet without a warrant is a suspiciously sloppy way to conduct an investigation of suspected criminals. But then we'll turn around and advocate something equally broad brush and not see the disaster our own policy wish list would bring.

For instance, a lot of people, claiming defense of freedom, would like to see the U.S. military close the borders to all unauthorized entry. (Never mind the *Posse Comitatus Act* or the fact that most of the 9-11 terrorists were apparently here with the approval of the INS.) Emotionally, that's understandable. But for freedom, it's as bad a "bright idea" as gun bans or mass surveillance of the innocent. It

wouldn't work. The border's too vast to be "interdicted." But the effort would inflict on the U.S. a standing army or other corps of enforcers so unimaginably huge and dangerous we might never be free of it. (For proof, read Joseph Miranda, *War on Drugs: Military Perspectives and Problems* (<http://www.drcnet.org/military/>). Although this article specifically addresses drug interdiction, any border-closing problem is similar.)

We can fight terror, or regular old crime, without vast new governmental powers and without further limitations on individual freedom. If new laws are needed (and that's always a dubious proposition), let them be legal lasers, micro-aimed at the guilty, not legal nukes, blasting everyone.

6. Resist bad laws. The ultimate responsibility of anyone who truly values freedom is to resist tyranny—personally. If the government succeeds in imposing a national ID card to monitor and control your activities, you should not only speak against the card, you should refuse to get one—even though the risk (in both legal trouble and denial of services) may be high. If facial-recognition cameras glare at us in every public place—tracking ordinary folks while criminals and terrorists practice easy means to spoof or evade them—it's going to be up to freedom lovers to monkey-wrench the snoop systems if legislatures and courts won't rid us of them. That may mean anything from wearing Groucho glasses to painting over the camera lenses to shooting the camera's little eyes out.

And you'll need to make those same kinds of decisions and commitments about anything else that bids to steal your, or your children's, freedom.

Individual resistance takes great courage, puts freedom lovers at great risk, and may have no useful impact if large numbers of people don't join in.

Amid the urge to pull together for the survival of the American tribe, country, and culture, the idea of resisting government currently seems unfashionable, unpatriotic, and to some, unthinkable. That's understandable in this dangerous moment. But in the long run, resistance to injustice and police-state policies is necessary.

7. Don't destroy the Bill of Rights in your daily work. If you're employed by a government agency that regularly exceeds its constitutional authority to the detriment of freedom, quit. If you work for a corporation whose products or government contracts are routinely used to destroy individual freedom, quit or transfer to a division that does something beneficial. Or, if you're in a position to do it, lobby bosses and board members for corporate-cultural change. This isn't easy. But withdrawing your labor from freedom-killing institutions is one of the most effective ways to halt the erosion of freedom. It's also a good way to maintain personal integrity. Don't close your eyes to the impact of your own daily decisions. Don't someday shrug and tell

your grandchildren that, when their freedom disappeared with your paid assistance, you were "only doing my job."

8. Go armed. Get a handgun if you don't have one. Learn to use it safely and well. Refuse to go where you can't go armed. Those who don't trust you with arms are saying they don't trust you with freedom.

Will you ever be in a position to foil an act of terrorism or tyranny? Probably not. But you will be showing, in the most meaningful way, that you understand that self-defense, by definition, can't be delegated to government. You'll be showing that you understand that freedom and its defense are personal responsibilities.

9. Check in with yourself every day. Ask yourself often: What did I do today to preserve the Bill of Rights? What did I do to make the government less intrusive on the lives of innocent people? What did I do to promote or practice self-reliance? What did I do to lay the groundwork for a freer future, even if the moment looks hopeless?

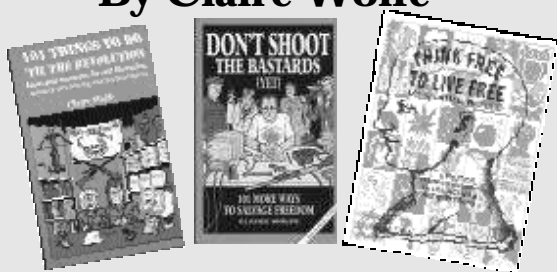
Only with this kind of total, totally honest, and totally unflinching commitment do we have a chance of bequeathing freedom to our children and grandchildren.

Ben Franklin observed that people who trade security for freedom end up with neither. Those may be the truest—and most ignored—words ever spoken. If we unresistingly surrender our rights for the comforting illusion that national ID chips, airport tweezer-seizures, military border closures, total electronic surveillance of the population or any other mass expansion of government power we'll deserve exactly what we get in the end.

Even if we're doomed to end up unfree, thanks to the unthinking trust and inertia of our fellow citizens, don't you at least want to be able to tell your grandchildren that you did everything within your power to prevent it, for their sakes? Don't you want, at least, to be able to pass the embers of resistance—if not a burning torch of freedom—on to them? Δ

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emergency solar power for \$950

By Jeffrey Yago, P.E., CEM

For less than the price of a desktop computer you can have the piece of mind that your lights and small appliances can operate for months without the utility grid.

It is relatively easy to provide emergency power for most appliances and lighting fixtures with a gasoline generator, but what if the power outage lasts weeks or months instead of days? You may feel prepared owning that 4 kW gasoline generator that you purchased last year to keep your refrigerator, television, and lights operating after storm-downed power lines, but what do you do when you run out of gasoline? What if the gas stations do not have electricity to pump the gasoline and your car's gas tank is also empty?

Most metropolitan areas in the United States rarely experience a power outage that lasts over a few hours. A power outage lasting one or two days during a winter snowstorm or spring hurricane is not uncommon for more rural areas, but very rarely will any part of the United States be without electricity for more than two weeks.

Even when a major hurricane takes down power lines across an entire state, temporary emergency assistance from relief agencies, linemen from unaffected states, rented commercial generators, and other make-

do efforts can bring back basic services until all the lines are repaired.

But what if the downed power lines or failed power grid affects a very large part of our country at the same time? What if the damage is so widespread that most homes and businesses will be without power for months, not days? If this widespread grid failure was caused by a terrorist attack or sabotage, we may have more to worry about than beer getting hot in the refrigerator. Under these conditions, remaining in any large city would be almost impossible, but for those living in more rural areas, many will stay home and try to make do. Even a little electric power can bring a lot of needed comfort for these people.

As a basis for this scenario, let us assume you live on several acres of land in a rural area, and you probably already own a wood stove, flashlight, have a well-stocked pantry, and use a well and septic tank. Let's also assume that even if you own a generator, its gasoline supply is limited and after several days you too will be in the dark if a working gas station is hundreds of miles away. You have just used the last of your candles and flashlight batteries, and are cooking on your wood stove or propane barbecue grille. That all-in-one backup battery power cart you bought at the discount warehouse store was cute, but it only operated your home computer or color television a few hours

on the first day of the outage, and now its small battery is also dead. There isn't a functioning utility grid to recharge your battery-operated appliances, and you now have lost all contact with the outside world.

So now what? What can you do to be prepared for this type of long-term situation without spending your life savings to build that underground bunker with the 5,000-gallon fuel tank or buying a \$50,000 solar power system?

Our first step is to identify the absolute minimum electrically powered devices you need to maintain a very basic level of lifestyle during a long-term power outage. Keep in mind that many luxury appliances like color televisions, home computers, refrigerators, electric water heaters, and drip coffee makers will be useless. Even if you could keep them operating, the refrigerator will run out of things to keep cold, the local television stations may be off the air, the downed phone lines will end your Internet surfing (unless you have a satellite connection), and it may be many months before you will have air conditioning and a hot bath again.

Let's start with the basics

Television has a very short range transmission and in rural areas reception is poor beyond 30 to 50 miles from the transmitting tower. Satellite



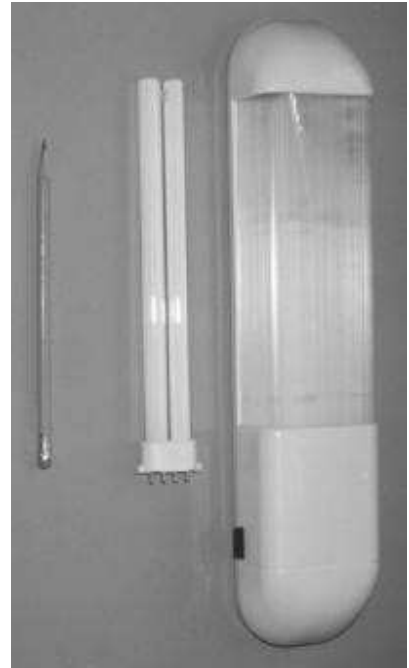
Small pre-packaged single light kit including gel cell battery, charge controller, solar module, and light

receivers may allow watching distant television channels if they are still operating and you still have emergency power, but a very good all-band radio can receive stations from around the entire world using very little battery consumption. You will want a radio with long range AM band and shortwave reception capability and uses the larger rechargeable C or D cell batteries. Make sure it includes a plug and adapter allowing it to be powered directly from a car's

12-volt cigarette lighter. The CC radio from the C. Crane Company is an excellent radio for emergencies and costs \$159.00. It also receives all emergency alert frequencies and has an optional solar panel to recharge the battery.

Now that you have a reliable window to the outside world, your next concern is lighting up the darkness. For this we turn to the RV and boating industry. If you have not walked into a boating or RV supply store in the past five-years you are in for a surprise. They have any household appliance and light fixture you can imagine, and they all operate from a 12-volt DC battery. I will address in a moment how you will provide this long term 12-volt DC power, so at this point purchase those items you can't live without and that will operate on 12-volt DC electricity.

Most low cost light fixtures use standard incandescent bulbs that soon burn out and consume too much electricity when used with a small battery backup system. Select lighting fixtures designed for either compact fluorescent lamps or the smaller T-8 style 2-foot fluorescent tubes. These provide excellent room lighting, the

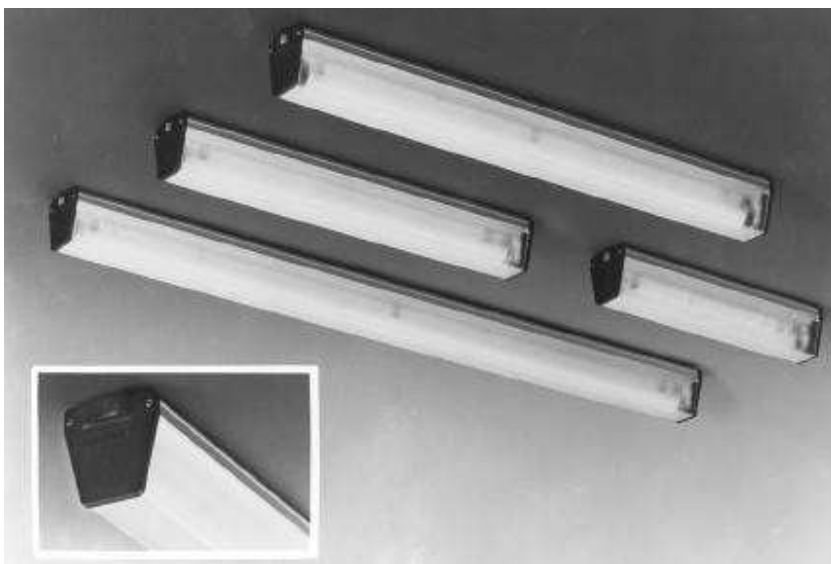


12-volt DC side-wall mounted compact fluorescent fixture with switch

lamps last several years, and they use very little electricity. If you have electrical skills, buy the 12-volt DC surface-mounted wall sconces and ceiling fixtures. Install these in rooms, corridors, and stairwells where your family spends the majority of their time at night. You can mount them beside your existing 120-volt AC fixtures to achieve the same light distribution.

For a more temporary installation, wire each fixture with very long flexible cables of suitable size. Keep the unmounted fixtures and attached rolled up cables stored until needed during a power outage. Be sure you label each light fixture by room location so it will have the correct length of cable back to the battery location.

Do not try to put these 12-volt DC fixtures in every room since you can use a flashlight in any lesser used areas, or just don't use these spaces after dark. Since you will be powering these DC fixtures from a centrally located battery, your battery wiring must be kept separate from all exist-



Popular 12-volt DC high efficiency fluorescent fixtures with end-mounted on/off switch

ing 120-volt AC house wiring. If you purchase DC fixtures that include their own on/off switch, you will not need to wire separate room wall switches, which makes installation much easier. Also keep in mind that at 12-volts, it takes 10 times the number of amps to supply the same wattage light fixture as a 120-volt circuit, so you will need larger wire sizes than normally used for AC circuits.

Follow manufacturer's installation recommendations for all wiring and wire sizing. Operating kitchen appliances like microwave ovens and refrigerators would make life easier and these larger appliances can be powered from a DC to AC inverter, but this will significantly increase your backup power system's costs and battery bank size. An inverter large enough to power a refrigerator, medium size microwave oven, or well pump can cost over \$3,000 and that still does not include the hundreds of pounds of batteries it requires to operate. If you are interested in installing a whole house off-grid backup power system, refer to the larger solar power systems described in previous issues.

Battery power supply

Since we are limiting your emergency electric needs to only those lights and appliances typically installed in a recreational boat or camper trailer, you do not need to buy a room full of batteries, expensive inverters, sub-panels, and generator transfer switches. If you keep your system needs down to only six or eight high efficiency 12-volt DC fluorescent light fixtures and a quality portable radio or small black and white television, then you will only need a few moderately priced components to build your own long-term backup power system.

List of materials:

2 quality gel cell 6-volt batteries-\$250

2 solar modules at 50 to 75 watts each-\$600

12-volt solar charge controller-\$75

2 safety disconnects and fuses-\$25

Total: \$950

Do not use car batteries as these will not provide the long-term reliability you need.

Remember that this bare bones solar power system is not intended to reduce your electric bills or to replace your existing lights and appliances that you use every day. This will be lighting that only operates during emergencies.

Your best choice for batteries is the 6-volt gel cell golf cart T-105 size battery. Each battery should have a 180-amp hour storage capacity and will weigh about 70 pounds. Their thick lead plates and sealed gel electrolyte will provide very reliable deep discharge capability and require no maintenance or refilling. It can be located almost anywhere; however, ambient temperatures above 90 degrees or below 40 degrees will substantially reduce their storage capacity. Since this is a 6-volt battery, you will need multiples of two in order to provide 12-volt power.

A good rule of thumb is to figure approximately 1 kWh of usable stored electricity in a battery this size. If you keep your electrical loads low, two 6-volt batteries should give you several days of emergency operation before recharging is required. You will not want to operate so many DC lights or appliances that you totally discharge the batteries each night. This will significantly shorten battery life and require a much larger solar array to keep them charged.

For a rough estimate of system performance, assume an average of six hours per day of direct sunlight (9 am to 3 pm), using two 75-watt solar modules, and allow 20% efficiency losses in the battery charging process. This system will have a maximum daily energy collection of 720 watt-hours (75 watt x 2 x 6 hours x 80%).

This would power four 25-watt compact fluorescent fixtures for seven hours per night (4 x 25 x 7) plus a radio. It should be obvious that you must keep your electrical loads to a minimum.

The more solar modules you have and the larger they are, the more appliances you can power, but since this will be the most expensive item in this system design you will want to keep your load needs small and within budget. For quality solar modules you will normally pay at least \$4 to \$6 per watt, but with smart shopping you should be able to find a pair of 75-watt modules for under \$600.

Shop for the larger 50 to 100-watt modules as these have a lower cost per watt and you will have fewer panels to interconnect. For this size system, a good rule of thumb is one module per golf cart battery. You can mount these on a frame made from 2" x 2" aluminum angle and 5/16" stainless steel bolts purchased from any home supply store. Remember, solar modules will be like kites in a strong wind, and even though they are reasonably lightweight, your structural concerns are wind uplift. A well built mounting structure is worthless if the entire assembly blows away.

Store it away

Since this will be a last defense emergency power system, you could make it portable and store the solar modules in your garage until needed. However, you do not want to allow the gel cell batteries to be discharged for any length of time or they will permanently be unable to hold a full charge later. A high quality trickle charger can be purchased to keep these batteries charged if your solar array will be kept in storage. However, you must use a charger that shuts off when the batteries are fully charged if you plan to keep it permanently plugged in. Also note that any charger used to charge gel cell batteries must be adjustable since gel cell



Solar photovoltaic modules can be permanently mounted on your roof or garage with the help of a few friends.

batteries have a different charge voltage than liquid filled batteries.

Whether your solar array will be mounted on a garage roof, van roof, or tall pole, it must face as close to south as possible and tilted up 30 to 60 degrees depending on your latitude.

Charge controller

When shopping for your own solar modules, you will also need to purchase a charge controller. This device controls the battery charging process and a high quality controller will squeeze more charging capacity from any given solar array. Two 75-watt 12-volt modules will require at least a 6-amp charge controller; four modules will require a 12-amp controller. Expect to pay at least \$75 for a quality 12-amp unit, and be sure you select a unit with the correct charge voltage output for gel cell batteries.

To round out your system you will need fuses and safety disconnects as shown in the wiring diagram. The Square D QO brand of circuit breakers can be substituted for the fuses

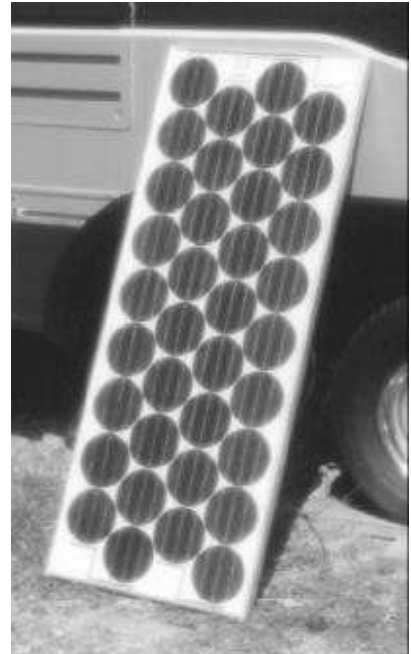
shown in the diagram. These are the only AC switchgear you will find in a home improvement center that is also UL rated for use with low voltage DC circuits.

Most AC fuses or circuit breakers are not rated for DC voltages and can be extremely unsafe if used. Purchase only DC-rated fuses and fuse holders. The automotive type 12-volt DC fuses and fuse blocks you will find in the RV and boating supply stores will protect your DC system components; however, they are not UL approved for permanent wiring installation in a residence.

If you are not familiar with these electrical safety issues and the National Electric Code, obtain the assistance of a licensed electrician to help with your final electrical connections.

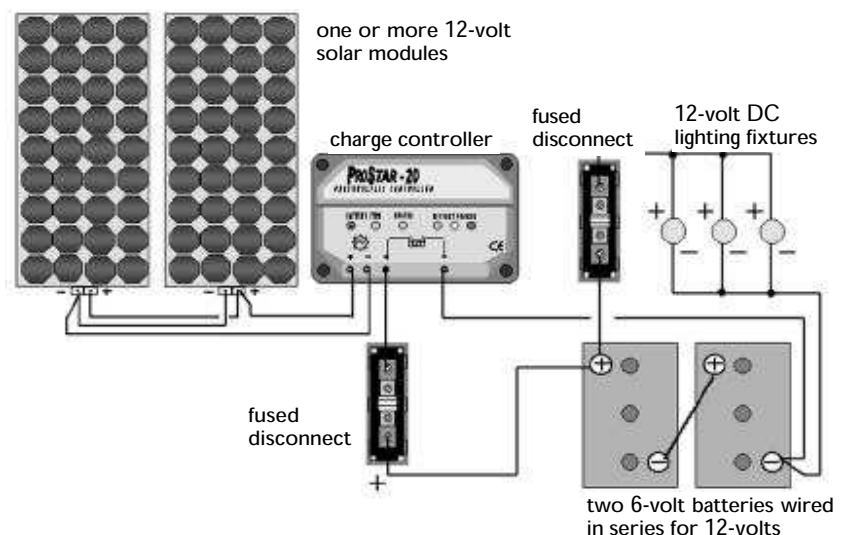
Portability

You may want to have your 12-volt DC lighting and appliance wiring terminate at a common point in a garage or utility room and be able to quickly disconnect the batteries, charge controller, and solar array. This would allow you to relocate your system to an RV or van if you are forced to relocate during a major crises.



Solar modules can also be portable or stored until needed. The 100 watt module shown next to RV measures 59" x 23-1/2".

The wiring diagram provides a basic guide for connecting the individual components. Be sure to note that the solar modules are nominal 12-volts (they will be labeled 16 to 17-volt) so they must be wired in parallel, not series like the 6-volt batteries or you will end up with 24-volts.



Wiring diagram for a 12-volt DC solar battery charger and emergency power supply

Material sources:

Dunimis Technology Inc., Solar power kit shown, 1-804-784-0063, www.dunimis.com

Port Supply, 12-volt marine appliances, 1-800-621-6885, www.port-supply.com

Lehman's, Non-electric appliances, 1-888-438-5346, www.lehmans.com

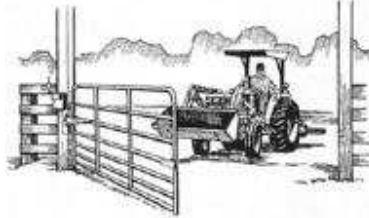
S. King Company, 12-volt RV appliances, 1-888-892-2547, www.sking-co.com

RV Parts Outlet, 12- volt RV appliances, 1-866-333-0999, www.rvpart-soutlet.com

C. Crane Company, Battery powered radios, 1-800-522-8863, www.ccrane.com

(Jeff Yago, author of the book *Achieving Energy Independence—One Step At a Time*, designs and installs turnkey independent energy systems. The book includes easy to apply system design information and includes wiring diagrams for most solar system types. It is available on line at www.pvforyou.com or by calling 804-784-0063 or from *BHM* [see pg. 92]). Δ

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the *gee-whiz!* page

By O.E. MacDougal

Water is one of the most common compounds to be found in the universe. Yet, it may be the most remarkable. Among its unique attributes:

- It can hold more heat, pound for pound, than any other substance, liquid, solid, or gas, other than ammonia.
- It has a unique characteristic in that as it freezes and turns from a liquid to a solid, it expands, taking more volume. (In fact, water begins to expand before it turns to ice at about 38° F., 6° above freezing.) The result is that, instead of sinking, ice floats. If this didn't happen life on earth would be radically different. Because it floats, ice forms a layer of insulation on top of lakes and polar oceans. This slows the loss of heat contained in the water

beneath the ice and allows fish and other life to survive below the ice. If water contracted when it turned to a solid, as almost every other liquid does, when lakes froze they would freeze from the bottom all the way to the top because there would be no insulating layer at the top. Everything, including life forms, would then be trapped until spring. Not only that, but instead of ice packs coating the polar seas, the most northern and southern oceans would also freeze from the bottom up.

- Water is also the closest thing we have to a "universal solvent." More compounds dissolve in water than in any other liquid, including acids, that we know of.

If a tree fell in the forest, and there was no one there to hear it, would it make a sound?

The answer is no, it wouldn't. What the question is meant to convey is the difference between what we call *sound* and what we call *sound waves*. Sound waves are just vibrations travelling through matter. When a tree falls, those waves exist no matter what. Sound, on the other hand, is the brain's interpretation of those waves. If there is no brain there to *hear* the sound waves, there is no sound.

What's meant by the old saying, "*the exception proves the rule*," when, in mathematics, logic, and science an exception actually *disproves* a rule?

The problem with the saying is that we're not saying it right. It should be: "*the exception proves the rule*." But over the years the word *proof* got corrupted into the word *prove*. A meaning of the word *proof*, rarely used today, is to *test*, just as a *proof round*, which gun manufacturers run through a gun after manufacturing it to see if it's safe, is a *test round*.

So, when you *proof* a rule you are really testing it to see whether the rule is valid or not and the exception actually threatens to disprove the rule. Today we should be saying, "*the exception tests the rule*." That way it would make sense. But then no one would say it.

Why did cavemen live in caves? They didn't. Or, at least, most didn't. The fact is, almost all prehistoric people lived in other types of shelters, just as primitive people from Papua New Guinea to the rain forests of South America do today. In truth, there are so few habitable caves that if ancient men had actually had to depend on them for survival the human race would have become extinct long ago.

So, why the term *cavemen*?

Well, some may actually have lived in caves. But it's more likely that when ancient men used caves at all it was for ceremonies (witness the cave paintings in France and Spain) or to escape from bad weather, predatory animals, or even human enemies.

The problem with the term *caveman* comes from the early days of archaeology. Because the interior of caves are generally protected from the elements, any tools, trinkets, or "bodies" left in there would have had a great chance of being preserved.

When archaeologists first started finding artifacts and bodies in caves, it was easy for them to assume that most early men actually lived in them.

Meanwhile, outside of caves, most of the millions upon millions of wooden huts and tents made from woven materials or animal hides, most of the wooden and bone tools, and even most human remains decomposed after a few short years and their existence is now lost to posterity. Even shelters made from rocks crumbled and may not be recognized as anything more than a pile of stones.

Even so, today, as investigative techniques get better, modern archaeologists are getting better at identifying those stone heaps, hearth remains, litter piles of bones, and even the tell-tale marks left by posts that were sunk into the ground to support buildings.

It was in those crude shelters and tents that more than 99 percent of our ancestors lived, and no reputable archaeologist today uses the term *caveman* seriously.

the **SURVIVAL** *garden*

By Alice Brantley Yeager
Photos By James O. Yeager

“**T**he home or kitchen garden is the most important and often the most profitable area on the farm, or the village, city, or suburban lot, because when properly managed it may be made to supply an astonishingly large variety and quantity of produce at far less than the same quality and quantity of purchased food would cost.”

The above quote is from *Farm Knowledge*, Revised Edition, 1919, published by Doubleday, Page & Company. The statement is as true today as it was when my father

ordered the four-book group from Sears, Roebuck and Co. At the time, the United States was emerging from World War I and one of the backup programs had been its War Gardens effort. During World War II everyone who had even a small back yard was urged to plant a Victory Garden. Folks who weren't much on gardening deemed it their patriotic duty to join in and were surprised at what they could produce from their gardens. Longtime gardeners took it all in stride.

Regarding our present global situation, it looks like we are again going to be involved in a lengthy struggle to conquer forces that would destroy our way of life or, at the very least, alter it. Déjà vu. Will we survive this onslaught? You betcha! We

Americans are experienced in survival techniques and moreover we have the responsibility of passing on our knowledge of basics to a younger generation.

Food is always of primary concern to everyone. Most of the food we see in our supermarkets is delivered by the trucking industry and, if there is a breakdown in transportation, empty shelves will begin appearing. Nothing sparks panic like a food or water shortage. Just observe how folks stock up when a disastrous weather condition threatens and some people buy things they wouldn't buy otherwise.

A well supplied pantry back at the beginning of the 20th century and before was not only a compliment to the lady of the house, but it was a

Diversify your garden to include different kinds of vegetables that will give a surplus to can, freeze, or dehydrate.



necessity. Over the years we have grown away from this quaint dependency (Too much work!) and substituted one-stop-shopping at a supermarket.

“Be prepared” has never been more significant than now. If you live in a city where there are vacant lots, find out who owns them and strike up an agreement to use them for Survival Gardens. Band together with some neighbors and work out a plot plan. It’s amazing what a group of cooperating gardeners can do. No doubt there’ll be some experienced folks present who can give good advice as to improving soil, when and what to plant, cultivation, etc. If no one has the necessary knowledge, call on the government’s Cooperative Extension Service. They are located in every county and parish and have mountains of pamphlets dealing with plants, insect control, plant diseases, etc.

Those of us who already have backyard gardens or larger need to tighten up and make plans to harvest even more from our gardens than usual. To get the maximum amount of produce we should make a list of plants that give us the best return for time and effort spent raising them. Discard the ones we are not especially fond of. If eggplant is not a favorite, give the space to something else. Just because everyone in the neighborhood raises eggplants doesn’t mean you have to follow suit.

Most vegetable plants in our gardens have similar requirements for crop production. Any garden needs plenty of sunlight, and a minimum of six hours is considered essential. Otherwise, plants won’t do their best. If the garden spot is surrounded by tall trees, buildings, or solid fences, there’s too much shade. Plants may grow, but they will be spindly and the harvest slim.

Good soil is an absolute must. If you have a garden to which you have been adding compost, well-rotted



Top: Enjoy fresh green beans from the garden, but put the excess away for a rainy day. **Middle:** Be sure to grow some Dixie butterpeas. They have a great, buttery flavor and are preserved like any other lima. **Bottom:** When you see your surplus tomatoes in the form of catsup, sauce, stewed tomatoes, whole, juice, etc., it’s mighty satisfying and worth every bit of time and effort.



If you have room for small fruits such as berries, blueberries, or grapes, select varieties suited to your climate. Rabbiteye varieties of blueberries thrive almost anywhere and Concord grapes still seem to be the hardiest.

manure, and other organic matter, hooray for you. You're in tune with your soil. If you're starting a new garden from scratch, a few problems may confront you. It would be wise to dig up the area, discard all grass, weeds, and roots and take soil samples to your local county extension agent for soil tests. You can then get advice as to what to do in case improvement is necessary. Less than desirable soil is not hopeless. It can be greatly helped by digging in organic matter (leaves, lawn clippings, pine needles, etc.) and avoiding harsh chemicals that kill earthworms. The ideal garden soil should be loose and loamy and have a pH of 6.0 - 8.0.

Gardens should be located with a view to moderate drainage when wet seasons occur. A slight slope will usually take care of the matter. Also, if long dry spells are expected, a garden should be within easy reach of a water source.

Consider your space and make the most of it. The following vegetables are generally considered as good yielders and will not only produce

plenty of fresh vegetables but there'll be plenty to can, freeze, or dehydrate.

Tomatoes. They're among our most versatile and best loved vegetables. An industry has been built around tomatoes. They're canned whole, diced, stewed, used in everything from chili to pizza sauce, mixed into salsa, sliced in salads, dehydrated—you name it. Tomato reigns and the recipes keep coming.

Tomatoes are not hard to grow if one follows some simple rules. Whether you buy plants or raise your own plants from seed, be aware that not every tomato variety does equally well in all parts of the country. Varieties that are recommended for hot humid areas are the best bet for our part of the United States (Zone 8, Southwestern Arkansas). Seldom do we have a summer without drought and soaring temperatures. We don't waste space with varieties recommended for cooler areas. Also, notice initials such as VNT, VFFNTA, etc., listed along with the names of varieties. These initials mean the plants are resistant to certain diseases and problem. For instance, "N" means

good resistance to nematodes, those ever present, microscopic, worm-like pests that live in the soil and can cause havoc with tomato plants as well as others. (Seed catalogs always give a list of initials and their meanings.)

Some of the varieties that have done well in our area are *Arkansas Traveler*, *Quick Pick*, *Thessaloniki*, *Celebrity*, *Park's Whopper*, and *Supersteak*. One that performed especially well in 2001 was *Super Fantastic*. We also took some suckers from this one in midsummer, rooted them in water, and planted them in early August to stretch our tomato season. The new plants began bearing in late summer and continued until frost.

Don't forget the small tomatoes generally referred to as "cherry tomatoes." They are among the heaviest bearers of all and are great for making tomato juice and preserves or to eat fresh from the vine. *Sweet Million* is a favorite of ours as it bears until frost and has wonderful flavor.

Beans. Another tasty vegetable with a variety of uses. Generally,

beans are either bush type or pole. Bush beans mature quicker, but pole beans will give a larger harvest over a longer period of time. Personally, I prefer to plant pole beans as the pods are easier to pick, pods are cleaner, and their trellises provide afternoon shade for shorter plants during hot weather. Pole beans are space savers.

Bush varieties that have performed well for us include *Buttergreen*, *Venture*, *Blue Lake*, *Romano*, and *Shamrock*. Pole beans of exceptional yield have been *Kentucky Wonder*, *Romano*, *Blue Lake*, and *Kentucky Wonder Wax* (yellow colored).

Let's not forget other beans of delicious flavor. There are lima beans (both bush and pole), soybeans, field peas (often called cowpeas), asparagus beans (pole)—the list is long. Best of all, beans are easy to grow and will give you a good return for your time and effort.

If you live in a part of the country where it is practical to grow beans recommended for drying, you can raise varieties hard to find in stores. Pods mature almost all at once and beans can easily be separated by hand from the dry pods. Be sure that beans are completely dry before storing in clean airtight jars. If there are signs of weevils or any other tiny bug, try freezing the beans for a few hours before storage. Due to summer humidity, we don't try to grow beans for drying but instead buy certain varieties we like and store them with a bay leaf or two in the jars. Bay leaves are also good to use when storing other dry foods—pasta, peas, grits, corn, rolled oats, etc.

Peppers. Every garden should have several types of peppers—another easy-to-grow vegetable. Peppers are an essential part of many recipes ranging from salads to soups and they have a taste range from sweet to yowee! Colors of mature sweet peppers range from ivory, green, yellow, orange, red, and purple to chocolate. These are particularly desirable when



Peppers range from hot to sweet and all have their place in the scheme of cooking. Plants will bear until frost if given some TLC.

one wants to show off a bit with a specially prepared meal. Hot peppers have a wide color spectrum, too, but must be used with caution.

As a general rule, pepper plants will stand heat and humidity better than some other plants. If temperatures stay above 100° F. for several days the plants will slow down on production, but will make a comeback when weather cools. Some of our best blocky varieties have been *Bell Boy Hybrid*, *California Wonder*, and

Albino. Cubanelle types include *Gypsy Hybrid*, *Aconcagua*, and *Aruba*.

One should always have some hot peppers on hand to give some zip and variety to dishes where it is appropriate to use them. Jalapeno peppers, available in both hot and mild types, are prolific bearers as well as some smaller peppers such as *Tabasco* and *NuMex Sunrise*. Not a great deal of space needs to be devoted to hot peppers, as a little goes a long way.



Herbs play a big part in seasoning and should be a part of every garden. Garlic may be planted along fences or other spots not needed for other plants. This photo shows sweet basil leaves ready for the dehydrator and the garlic bulbs dug from one clump of garlic.



Left: Most of us don't have room for large vining plants such as pumpkins, but they, as well as winter squash, are always available in the fall on roadside stands. Canned pumpkin makes delicious pies, cookies, and cakes. **Right:** Nothing is more enticing than home canned fruit and preserves. In this photo, it's canned pears and pear honey. Don't overlook local orchards as a source of supply. If you have room for a few fruit trees, select those best suited to your area. It may seem like a long term investment, but it's certainly worthwhile.

Seasoning plants. Those of us who love food seasoned with something besides salt and pepper are sure to grow some herbs or garlic in our gardens.

Nothing peeps up a roast like bits of garlic cloves tucked in here and there. Garlic is a blessing to the kitchen and is very easy to raise as hardly any pests attack it. It flourishes in the garden and may be grown alongside fences out of the way of other crops. When the plants go dormant in the summer, bulbs may be dug and hung up in mesh bags in a cool room to be used when needed. Where winters are not severe, plants will begin their cycle of growth putting up new leaves as weather cools down in the fall and showers begin. We often use fresh garlic leaves to season food during winter and early spring.

Raising one's own herbs just adds to the fun of gardening. Not only can leaves be used fresh during the growing season, but they may be dehydrated, crumbled, and put in clean small jars for winter use. (Be sure to label and date.)

Pick out the ones you like and try your hand at raising them. There are a few that are a little finicky as to climate and soil, but most herbs will thrive under normal conditions if given some TLC. We grow plenty of sweet basil as that is one of our favorites. We also like thyme and summer savory. Seasoning plants add both to the preparation and pleasure of meals and they can be used with many dishes, and they're delightful to flavor vinegars. So, reserve a spot in the garden for some herbs. You'll be glad you did.

I have only touched on a few plants that will give a good account of themselves almost anywhere they are grown. Be familiar with your climatic and soil limitations and grow, grow, grow! Home grown produce free of pesticides and Lord-knows-what-else is a great defense and survival technique. Along with working in a garden come fringe benefits—quiet times to think, something accomplished, getting in tune with nature, fresh air, and exercise, and

then there's that well stocked survival larder.

Seed and garlic sources:

Tomato Growers Supply Co., P.O. Box 2237, Fort Myers, FL 33902

Johnny's Selected Seeds, RR 1, Box 2580, Albion, ME 04910-9731

Totally Tomatoes, P.O. Box 1626, Augusta, GA 30903-1626

W. Atlee Burpee, Warminster, PA 18974

Geo. W. Park Seed Co., 1 Parkton Ave., Greenwood, SC 29647-0001

J. W. Jung Seed Co., 335 S. High St., Randolph, WI 53957-0001

Other suggestions

1. If you are unfamiliar with preserving food, be sure to obtain a good guide to home canning, freezing, and dehydration (See Jackie Clay's article this issue for a great primer. *BHM's* anthologies are loaded with such articles.) One of the best books on the market is published by a long-time manufacturer of canning supplies. For a copy of the *Ball Blue Book*, send check for \$5.95 to: Alltrista Corp., Consumer Products Co., Dept. PK 42, P.O. Box 2005, Muncie, IN 47307-2005.

2. For dehydrating, we use an electric dehydrator. Living in a somewhat humid region, we find this more dependable than other methods. If you live in a drier climate, you may have good success with drying food outdoors. Also, some folks recommend oven drying.

3. All electric appliances, such as freezers, can be victims of power failure. It is a good idea to have backup in the form of a dependable generator. Otherwise, you may lose a considerable amount of food if power is off for several days. Get a generator that will produce power enough to support your *necessary* appliances.

4. If you are new to the idea of survival—and this doesn't necessarily mean folks who are moving to wilderness areas—*BHM's* eight anthologies will make a great reference library. Δ

Long-term food storage

By Jackie Clay

You've decided that you're going to put at least a year's worth of food away for your family just in case. Great!

Everyone should do that. We store enough to feed friends, extended family, and neighbors from time to time, as well. We could not turn down anyone who came to us saying, "I'm hungry." So I stock up more than most people do.

Flours and grains

Man may not live by bread alone, but grains form the base for many



The author prepares green beans for canning and dehydrating.



Home canning helps fill the pantry. Note decorative popcorn tins in the background, filled with dry foods.

meals, especially during a period of hard times. With flours and whole grains stored, you have the main ingredient for homemade pastas, breads, rolls, biscuits, pancakes, waffles, tortillas and other flat breads, pie crusts, cookies, cakes, and more.

I store unbleached (who needs bleaching compounds in their diet?) flour, at least 200 pounds, in 25-pound store bags, wrapped in plastic bags and duct tape, in Rubbermaid garbage cans with locking lids in my pantry. This will feed three of us, plus extra for friends and family, for over a year, coupled with other flour products and whole grains.

You can add any specialty flours your family likes, such as rye, amaranth, or Durham (for specialty pastas).

In addition to this flour, I like at least 100 pounds of hard wheat (sometimes called "wheat berries"). As ground whole wheat goes rancid fairly quickly, I like this wheat on hand to grind for all of my whole wheat recipes. In addition, whole wheat grain will grow when planted, making wheat growing on a fairly small plot possible to restock my supply. As little as a 50x50-foot plot will grow enough wheat for a small family's needs.

I also stock about 20 pounds of corn meal, 20 pounds of masa harina de maiz (corn flour) which I use to make tamales and corn tortillas, along with 25 pounds of popcorn (grinds nicely for cornmeal, as well as popping for treats), and 25 pounds of hominy corn (makes hominy and also masa harina de maiz).

Rice, both brown and white, fit nicely in our storage pantry. We also store about 25 pounds of a combination of white and brown rice with a few pounds of wild rice mixed in.

And don't forget rolled oats. They are much more versatile than just using them for oatmeal. I include them in several multi-grain breads, breakfast cake, bars, meat loaf, granola, and cookies. And as for oatmeal, we like it cooked up with peaches, strawberries, and apples, with cinnamon for a treat.

Any grains that are ground, especially corn meal, masa harina de maize, and whole wheat will get rancid quicker than do whole grains, which usually stay good for many years. Even so, flours (except whole wheat flour) will stay perfectly good for five years or more if kept dry and stored in air tight and bug and rodent-proof containers.

I buy my white flour, cornmeal, etc. on sale at local supermarkets, usually just before Thanksgiving, as it is cheaper then. Otherwise, I pick it up at Sam's Club or other restaurant supply houses.

I pick up whole grains from local grain farmers. Sometimes the wheat needs a bit more cleaning if dusty, but a few pours from one basket to another on a windy day ensures very clean wheat. (And my wheat is *not* treated with toxic fumigants in storage bins before being ground into flour, as is most wheat sold to flour mills.)

When buying flour to store, be absolutely sure the bags are completely sealed, with no flour leaking out, to prevent flour weevil problems. In areas where there is a weevil problem (webs and "bugs" in unsealed cornmeal and flour), some folks freeze each bag of flour for several days before wrapping and storing it in completely bug-proof containers. I have not done this, but I am exceptionally careful not to store any flour products that were not very well sealed from the processing plant, and

I keep them in insect proof containers. Remember that these moths are very small and squeeze through very tiny openings.

It is not necessary to buy flours and grains from long-term storage companies unless you fear flooding. In this case, sealed tins or buckets of flours would be a good idea. I've had plain white flour stored for over five years, which is just as good today as it was when I bought it.

Beans and other legumes

When one thinks of long-term storage, usually dried beans come first to mind. I guess this is because they remain good for so long, are nutritious, and taste pretty darned good to boot. But, for heaven's sake, don't just buy a hundred pounds of navy beans and say you're all set for whatever may come your way. All beans do not taste the same. There's a big, big difference between a large white lima and a Jacob's cattle bean, for instance. Some taste nutty, some bland. Some cook up quickly, some require hours of cooking. Some remain firm after cooking, others get mushy and soft. Experiment with a

wide variety of beans before committing to a choice.

We store about 50 pounds of combined legumes, which include pintos, Cherokee mixed cornfield beans, Jacob's cattle, Hopi black bush, navies, red kidney, and a dozen old Native American varieties, along with lentils, soup peas, blackeyed peas, and garbanzos.

Beans are a great protein source and combine well in many different dishes. Refried beans, fried dry pea patties, stews, soups, chiles, baked beans, and casseroles are just a few uses for these versatile legumes.

You can buy your beans in local markets, health food stores, and co-ops, or you can do like we do, and grow your own.

All beans store a long, long time in an airtight and bug and rodent-proof container. I keep mine in gallon glass jars and in decorative popcorn tins, right on handy shelves in the kitchen. While old beans do take longer to cook up tender, they last indefinitely; I've grown beans from 500-year-old seeds. And if you can grow plants from seed, you can certainly eat them.



Home canned foods are more tasty and nutritious, and it takes only minutes to get between the garden and the jar.

Dried pasta

While I make a lot of homemade pasta, I still keep quite a bit in our storage pantry. When you're busy with a survival situation, you may not have time to make pasta. So I've put away 10 pounds of long spaghetti, 10 pounds of lasagna noodles, 10 pounds of wide egg noodles, 5 pounds of alphabet macaroni, 15 pounds of elbow macaroni, and a few pounds of assorted pasta noodles.

This dry pasta keeps indefinitely when stored in a dry, bug and rodent-proof container. As with my beans and other legumes, I use decorative popcorn tins and gallon glass jars. After several years, the elbow macaroni smells a bit rancid, but it is still good when cooked with cheese or other sauces.

Sugar and honey

You will probably agree with me that we all eat too much sugar. And although honey is natural and better for us than refined sugar, it's still sugar. But in bad times, we usually feel better with "treats" from time to time. And these treats often include sugar. Also, much fruit is home canned with a sugar syrup, and if you're going to can to keep your pantry from running out in bad times, you'll need quite a bit for fruits, pickles, jams, jellies, preserves, etc.

Although my husband Bob is a diabetic, we do include sugar in our storage pantry. I keep a 25-pound sack in a plastic garbage can, along with assorted other dry foods. Much of this sugar is used in canning and desserts for my son, David, and myself. Bob needs a sugar substitute.

Sugar stores indefinitely if kept dry. If it should get damp and harden, you can still save it. Beat the bag with a hammer, being careful not to split the sack. (I would put the paper bag in a heavy plastic bag, just in case.) Soon the hard lump will be many smaller ones, easy to crumble with your hand.



A full pantry staves off hunger.

Honey is a good long-term storage bet. Honey may crystallize if it gets too cool, but it is still good and will re-liquify if warmed up by sitting the jar in a saucepan of boiling water. Raw honey only needs to be put into quart or larger jars and sealed. I have 15-year-old honey that's still great. (In case you're wondering, I try to keep a little of each food for a long, long time, to see just *how* long it will remain good. I *do* rotate my long-term storage food, using the oldest and replacing it with newer food in an ongoing process.)

I keep two gallons of honey, stored in quart jars.

Besides these two sweeteners, I keep 10 pounds of brown sugar and 5 pounds of powdered sugar, stored in the bag they come in until I'm ready to use them. These bags are stored in the plastic garbage can, along with the white sugar and much more. The only problem I've had regularly with brown sugar is hardening in the bag. I've cured this by breaking the sugar

into chunks, dropping them into a gallon glass jar and adding a piece of paper towel, dampened with water. Close the jar and in a few days the sugar will be soft again.

Miscellaneous dry goods

Powdered egg is a handy dry food to keep on the pantry shelves. The modern powered egg is much better than the old "green eggs" of military service days. Not only is it great in cooking, but it tastes pretty good too. I keep three #10 cans, which hold almost a gallon, on my pantry shelves.

Powdered margarine and butter are another "must have" for most families. These are reconstituted with either water or vegetable oil, with the oil tasting much better. I keep three of each, even though we have a cow and goats. One never knows when they may be dry and you need butter.

Powdered cheese is a great product that stores easily. I use it in macaroni and cheese, on popcorn, in potatoes au gratin, casseroles, and more. I keep about 10 pounds of a powdered cheese sauce that I buy from a local restaurant supply house quite inexpensively.

Dry yeast is a definite must in a long-term storage pantry, as well as in everyday use. I buy mine in 1-pound vacuum packed aluminum foil bags. Unopened and frozen, they last indefinitely. Unopened and on the shelf, they'll last for a couple of years. Opened and on the shelf, dry yeast is active for about a year or a little more. I keep an unopened bag in my propane fridge's freezer, figuring that if an emergency situation occurs, causing us to have to do without the fridge, my yeast will still be good for better than a year. I have another one on the shelf that I use every day.

Baking soda is also a necessary baking leavening agent, also useful for an antacid, deodorant, cleaner, and more. It keeps on the shelf forever. I keep 5 pounds.

Baking powder is hard to do without. You'll need it for quick breads, such as cornbread and biscuits, which are very important in emergencies because you can eat well and spend only minutes in baking. It keeps well for years without losing its leavening ability. I keep two large tins, one to use and one to store.

Salt is needed, not only to improve the flavor of foods but in meat preservation and canning. I keep 10 pounds of iodized salt in 1-pound boxes, and 10 pounds of canning salt. Canning salt is used in pickles because table salt contains chemicals that sometimes cause pickles to soften or discolor. Dry salt will keep forever. If it should harden, beat it with a hammer and it will be made useable.

Dry milk is a necessity, even for those of us who have dairy animals. One never knows when your animals may be dry and you need milk—today. Dehydrated milk does *not* taste as good as fresh, no matter whose claims say theirs does. But it is great for cooking and it will work on cereal or for chocolate milk. The boxes at your local store will last for years with no change in taste. I keep about 10 pounds of dry milk, even though we have dairy animals.

Spices are indispensable. Be sure to store a wide variety of your favorites. True, spices do lose some of their flavor in a year or so. But better to have an old spice than no spice. They will “keep” forever, but will slowly lose their potency. I buy most of mine in oriental markets and restaurant supply houses.

Miscellaneous canned necessities

Peanut butter isn't just for kids, folks. It's a tasty, great protein source that's versatile, as well. No one guesses that the secret ingredient in my best stir-fry is a tablespoonful of chunky peanut butter. Remember that besides peanut butter sandwiches and spread on toast, you can bake cookies

and other deserts with this protein-filled treat. Unopened, it'll last for years.

Shortening and vegetable oils will make cooking more of a pleasure, not to mention all the baking you may want to do. Most shortenings will store indefinitely in the pantry and unopened bottles of vegetable oils will be fine for over a year, usually longer. Rotate the oils more frequently than the solid shortening. You will probably like using corn oil to reconstitute your powdered margarine and butter, instead of water. You'll use more shortening and vegetable oil in a year than you'd guess. I store a dozen cans of shortening and 6 large bottles of vegetable oil.

Dehydrate foods at home

Unless you need sealed cans of dehydrated foods, you can dehydrate food for long-term storage yourself. It's amazing how easy it is to dry foods at home. While I home-can a huge variety of foods, I also rely on dehydrated foods, which compliment the canned foods. For instance, canned peas taste like nasty mush. Sorry Jolly Green, it's the truth. So instead of canning my peas, I dehydrate them. When rehydrated, they taste almost as good as fresh.

You can dehydrate foods on cookie sheets in a gas oven, with only the pilot on, in the oven of a wood cook stove with a slow fire and the door open, over a register, or in the back of your station wagon or Suburban on a hot day. I've dried foods on sheets, laid out on tin porch roofs, and in hay mows, protected from insects and dust by cheesecloth or old curtains. But, finally, I caught a killer sale at Wal-Mart and bought a round plastic electric dehydrator. (Vita-Mix also sells these.) I've dehydrated bushels of produce and it's showing no sign of weakening. I also bought two extra trays 10 years back, which help.

We live far off grid, but use the dehydrator when we have the genera-

tor on for a few hours for my writing or tool use. It's a little peculiar, but it works.

Peas are very easy to dehydrate at home. Simply shell your peas, then dip them into boiling water for one minute to blanch them. If you don't, the flavor will not keep as well. Let them drip dry, then spread them out on your trays, one layer deep. Dehydrate until they are hard and puckered. If using a cookie sheet, stir them a time or two.

Cool and pour into airtight, vermin-proof containers. I use odd shaped glass jars. I keep at least two gallons in storage, and they'll last for years. Rehydrate in boiling water and let them steep for an hour or two. For use in soups and stews, simply sprinkle a handful or two of dried peas into your stock. Simmer until done. Simple and tasty.

Not enough peas in the garden to dehydrate? Buy some on-sale frozen peas, thaw 'em, and go at it. They work fine.

Onions and garlic are about as easy as it gets. I peel them and slice whole round slices off, about an eighth of an inch thick. Place in a single layer on your tray and begin dehydrating. Dry until quite dry. I then chop them, either using a blender (when the generator is on) or in a food grinder. Dump the chopped onions out on a cookie sheet and dry further, until crunchy-dry. These may be stored as is or reduced to a textured powder to use in cooking as onion powder. I do some of each, and keep a quart of onion powder, a half pint of garlic powder, a quart of minced onion, and a half pint of minced garlic on my pantry shelf. I use these every day.

Sweet corn is another of my favorites. I briefly boil a couple dozen ears of corn, then cut the kernels off the cob and lay them on a drying tray in a single layer. Corn needs to be stirred often if on a cookie sheet, but is fine on a screen or regular dehydrator tray. Dry until tough

and hard, then store in an airtight jar or other container. To rehydrate and use as fresh corn, I boil it for one minute, then place in the fridge overnight. The next day it's hard to tell from fresh corn. This sweet corn will keep for years in decent storage. If you run out of fresh corn, frozen or canned corn will dehydrate fine.

Carrots dehydrate great at home. Slice or dice the carrots into 1/4-inch pieces. Blanch for one minute in steam or boiling water. Drip dry and put on a tray in a single layer. Dehydrate until leathery and quite hard.

Green beans dry fine, too. Simply cut into one inch pieces, blanch for a minute, dry, and lay in a single layer on the tray. They should be leathery-brittle. Green beans take a little more time to rehydrate. You can't just put a handful into a casserole and bake it. They'll still be tough. They should be rehydrated the night before and kept in the water they were boiled in overnight in the fridge.

Peppers of all kinds dehydrate wonderfully. The old way was to string them by the stems and hang in the sun on a porch wall. But if you live in a humid climate, you'll probably have molded peppers if you use this method. So use the dehydrator method. Seed the peppers, then halve thin-walled hot peppers or slice thick-walled peppers, such as bell peppers, in 1/4-inch wide slices. Dehydrate in a single layer until crunchy.

Broccoli works great dehydrated, which is lucky because it is terrible when canned. Cut into small florettes and blanch. Lay out in a single layer and dehydrate to a very crisp texture, like artificial little trees. It works great in cheese and broccoli soup and casseroles.

Fruits are simple to dehydrate, too. You can just slice ripe **bananas** 1/4-inch thick onto your tray and dry them to a leathery-hard disc. **Peach** slices are equally easy. Make your own raisins from whole seedless

grapes. Just stem them, sort and lay out in a single layer. Easy? You bet.

Apples can be peeled (or not) and sliced 1/4-inch thick into a bowl of water with a good squeeze of lemon and a teaspoonful of salt in it to prevent discoloration. Then they are drip dried and laid in a single layer on the dehydrator trays. Apples dry to a leathery-crisp texture. I keep about 3 gallons of dehydrated apple slices, as they cook up quickly and easily in recipes from pies to granola. We like them for treats, too.

Strawberries dry nicely when sliced 1/4-inch thick. You'll want these dehydrated to a crisp texture. I've used a lot of fresh ones, but have bought frozen strawberries on a great sale and done them up with equal success. I put up as many dehydrated strawberries as I have and am glad for them come winter.

Home dehydrating is easy and the food tastes good. An added bonus is that a bushel of produce can be dehydrated and stored in a couple of jars. Many foods contain up to 90 percent water. Pick up a good book on dehydrating food, and go at it.

Canning foods

While you can buy up a bunch of canned meats, vegetables, fruits, jams, jellies, pickles, and so forth at the store to put in a long-term storage pantry, it's a good idea to learn to home-can foods. Both will have an indefinite shelf life, but home-canned foods will be much more tasty and nutritious. And if a situation develops where you can not buy more store-bought food, you can reuse your jars and rings (not lids) and home-can more food to restock your pantry. All it takes is a garden and a little skill.

Nearly anything you see canned in the store can be canned at home, including meat. Here's how:

Equipment needed:

- Water bath canner for high-acid foods, such as fruit, pickles, jelly, jams, preserves, tomatoes and tomato

sauce. A "Big blue" canner costs \$21-\$27 and lasts indefinitely.

- Pressure canner for low-acid foods, such as vegetables and meats. (No, they do not blow up.) This canner has a gauge or weight on top, along with a lock-down heavy lid. Cost new is \$89-\$139. Lasts indefinitely. (I bought a used one for \$5.)

- Canning jars, from half pint upwards, depending on your needs. Cost new is \$5.49-\$6.49 per dozen, including new rings and lids. Jars last indefinitely, rings 20+ years with care. I've been given boxes and boxes, bought others for less than \$1 a dozen at flea markets and auctions. Ask around. Standard canning lids must fit correctly.

- Lids to fit jars, either wide mouth or regular. Cost \$.94 to \$1.89 per dozen (wide mouth are more expensive). One use only.

- Canning book or manual, such as *Ball Blue Book*. Cost \$5.95-\$18. Lasts indefinitely (or until a new one comes out with the latest safe canning information).

- Jar funnels, jar lifters, and lid wands to pick up hot lids are all cheap and last forever.

High-acid foods

Fruits, tomatoes, pickles, etc.

High-acid foods are the easiest to can, as they require no pressure canning. High-acid foods do not develop bacteria that cause food poisoning. If they go bad, they mold or ferment instead. Yucky, but not deadly. Canning with a water bath canner processes foods at water-boiling temperature, which seals the jars.

Whenever I begin to can any food, I always get out my canning manual no matter how many hundreds of times I've put up the same exact food. You should do the same. While you are looking through it for the food you are going to water bath can today, take a gander at the altitude chart if you live above 1,000 feet. You will need to adjust the time upwards by 5

minutes for altitudes between 1,001-3,000 feet, adding another five minutes for altitudes between 3,001 and 6,000 feet, another five for altitudes between 6,001 and 8,000 feet, and so on. We live at 4,200 feet, so I add 10 minutes to all processing times.

Okay, let's can peaches to see how to use the water bath canner. The basic process is the same, but there are differences for each food, so read your canning manual before starting.

1. Get out your jars, and check for cracks or nicks in the rim; any damaged jars need to be thrown away because they will not seal and will often break during processing.

2. Wash jars and rings in hot soapy water. Rinse and leave in hot water until needed.

3. Select only sound, ripe peaches (unripe peaches will not peel easily).

4. To peel peaches, dip them in a kettle of boiling water for a minute only, then drain and put into cold water. This loosens the skin, making them easy to slip off.

5. Cut peaches in half. Remove pit. Leave in halves or cut into desired slices. Drop pieces into a large bowl containing cold water and either half a cup of lemon juice or a commercial product to prevent darkening, such as Fruit Fresh.

6. Place jar on dry folded towel and pack peaches, leaving half an inch of head space (head space is just room at the top of the jar).

7. Pick out enough new jar lids for your jars and bring to a boil in enough water to just cover them. Keep them in hot water until you are ready to use them.

8. Cover peaches with boiling hot syrup (see your manual for proportions of this sugar and water solution), leaving half an inch of head space.

9. Slide a wooden spoon or rubber spatula down between the peaches to let air bubbles escape and more syrup contact the fruit.

10. Wipe the jar rim well with a clean damp cloth. Place hot lid on jar and screw down ring firmly tight. Use no force.

11. Place jars on rack of full, hot, water bath canner. Never place hot jars in contact with anything cold or vice versa, as they will break.

12. When the canner is full, the water should cover all of the jars by one inch. If you need to add more water, use a tea kettle of hot water to bring the level up to the necessary point.

13. Bring water to a rolling boil with the top on the canner. When it begins to boil vigorously, begin your timing. For altitudes below 1,000 feet, you'll need to process your peaches for 25 minutes for pints and 30 minutes for quarts.

14. When the time is up, turn off heat and remove the jars from the canner carefully with a jar lifter. Place on a dry folded towel, out of drafts, to cool. Don't tighten any bands that seem loose. The jars will seal. When the jars are cool (over night), inspect seals. A sealed jar will have a tight indentation in the center of the flat lid. It will not give on pressure from a finger in the center. The contents of an unsealed jar should be eaten at once or refrigerated.

15. Remove the bands and wash if necessary. The bands are not necessary to maintain the seal and may cause rust to form. Store the jars in a dark, dry, relatively cool place.

That's all there is to water bath canning. If you can boil water and tell time, you can do it easily.

Low-acid foods

Vegetables, meats, stews, etc.

Remember, none of these foods can be safely canned in a hot water bath canner, no matter what your grandma or auntie used to do. It is simply not safe.

In the water bath canning process we had to adjust the time we processed our foods, according to

altitudes above 1,001. In a like manner, we must adjust the pressure we process our foods with for altitudes above 1,001. Check your canning manual for the correct pressure for your altitude.

Before you start, unless your canner is new, have the pressure gauge checked by your extension office to make sure it reads correctly. Most do, but to be safe have it checked.

Some pressure canners have weights over a pressure valve, but for simplicity's sake, we'll assume your pressure canner has a gauge, as most do today.

Let's do up a batch of chili. Most foods are pressure canned in nearly the same way, but, again, check your canning manual for other foods. For recipes with mixed ingredients, simply process the food for the longest length of time required for any single ingredient. In this case, it's meat.

1. Select crack and nick-free jars.

2. Make a large pot of your favorite chili; the beans do not have to be completely tender, but well cooked.

3. Wash jars in hot soapy water, then rinse, keeping hot until needed.

4. Boil enough lids for your jars and keep in hot water until needed.

5. Place jar on dry folded towel and carefully ladle your chili into the jar, leaving one inch head space.

6. Wipe jar rim with damp, clean cloth. Place hot lid on and screw down ring firmly tight. Use no force.

7. Place jars on rack in pressure canner, containing two inches of hot water. (Or the amount recommended by manufacturer.)

8. Fasten pressure canner lid firmly with steam valves open. Turn on heat.

9. Exhaust steam forcefully for 10 minutes.

10. Close petcock or vent, allowing pressure to build.

11. Hold at correct pressure (10 pounds for altitudes below 1,000 feet) for an hour and fifteen minutes (pints), or an hour and a half (quarts). Adjust heat as needed.

12. When time is up, turn off heat. When gauge returns to zero, carefully release any remaining steam and remove lid, taking care to avoid any steam in canner.

13. Lift out jars carefully with jar lifter and place on a dry, folded towel, away from drafts, to cool. Do not tighten any loose bands.

14. When cool, check for seal. Sealed jars dent inward and do not give under the pressure of a finger in the center.

15. Remove rings and wash jars. Store in a dark, cool, dry place.

I told you it was easy.

When opening the jar, again check the seal, then open it and inspect and sniff the product. If any of these raises questions of quality, throw it out where animals and children can not get hold of it. To be safe, always bring low-acid foods to boiling temperature for 15 minutes before eating.

Now, using your home food processing skills, you can effectively and cheaply stock up enough food to last your family through any hard time. Be sure to store goodies, such as fruits, favorite canned recipes, jams, pickles, etc. When one is having worries, nothing helps like a little treat.

Here are some samples of home canned foods you can store and use:

Apples, applesauce, apricots, baby foods, asparagus, barbecue sauces, beans of all types, beef roasts, stew meat, beets, blackberries, cabbage, corn, carrots, celery, cherries, cheese, chicken, chili, clam chowder, clams, conserves, corned beef, crab apple jelly & pickles, cranberry sauce, elderberry jelly, elk, fish, grapefruit, grapes, grape jelly, greens, jams, ground beef, jellies, juices, lamb, maple syrup, mixed vegetables, mincemeat, moose, mushrooms, okra, parsnips, peaches, pears, peppers,

pickles, pie fillings, plums, plum jelly and conserve, poke, pork, potatoes, poultry, preserves, pumpkin, rabbit, raspberries, rhubarb, salsa, sauerkraut, sausage, seafoods, soups, taco meat, taco sauce, tomatoes, tomato catsup, tomato sauce, turkey, turnips, venison, watermelon pickles, wild game, fowl, and much more.

Remember though, there are 52 weeks in a year, so if times get tough you will need more food than you first think. There may be no fast food, only homecooked meals. Calculate carefully and err on the bountiful side, rather than have your family go hungry. And can a wide variety. No family likes to eat beans every meal.

Pet foods

Perhaps the easiest foods to store for your dogs and cats are dry foods. Under decent storage conditions, a good quality dog or cat food will remain fresh for at least a year. Store a high quality dry food, not the "cheaper" brands. As with most everything, you get what you pay for. Add up what your pets eat in a week, a month, then multiply it by 12. Store in rodent-proof containers.

It's also a good idea to include a few cans of quality dog and cat food for a treat now and then. I knew a lady who survived the depression with her dear fox terrier. The woman was very poor and could not afford any dog food, whatsoever. And, of course, there were very few table scraps. So to feed her beloved pet, she trapped woodchucks and muskrats, which she skinned for a few dollars and canned the boned meat for her dog. Coupled with a few meager table scraps, her fox terrier came through the hard times fat and sassy.

You and your family can come through hard times in triumph, not merely "survive" them. All it takes is a bit of planning, a lot of hard work, and some ingenuity. Δ

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The coming American dictatorship

Part VIII

America as a fascist country: how it became that way, how it interferes with our freedoms, and who's to blame

By John Silveira

(This is the eighth and final installment of a series on the erosion of our constitutional government. The entire series is now available on CD-ROM. See page 89.)

There were three of us—Dave Duffy, O.E. MacDougal, and me—in Dave's car as we returned from Brookings, Oregon, to the magazine's offices in Gold Beach. Dave, of course, is the publisher of *Backwoods Home Magazine* and Mac is our poker-playing friend from southern California.

Most of the day the three of us had been discussing the steady loss of freedoms in this country. Mac thinks the losses will continue and that they've been getting worse for the last several decades. He even thinks a dictatorship is possible in this country and could happen within the lifetimes of the three of us.

The ride was uneventful because Mac, who had arrived at the office at 2 a.m. that morning and had slept briefly on the floor under one of the printers, was asleep again on the back seat.

We got to the office late in the afternoon and parked down back. Mac was still asleep and as Dave got out he said, "Let's let him sleep."

We did, and we went upstairs and back to work.

About an hour later I looked up and there was Mac coming in the front door. He carried a couple of bags.

"We decided to let you sleep," Dave said.

"I woke up when you guys closed the doors," Mac said. "I decided to go for a walk and I stopped down at one of the local stores." He put the bags

on the table next to the refrigerator, then reached in one and pulled out a bottle. "Grapes, fermented," he said as he held it up. It was a bottle of merlot. He placed it on the table and reached back into the bag. "Deep-fried mushrooms," he said as he pulled out another package. He reached back in and pulled out something else.

"Grapes, seedless and unfermented," he said, and he was holding a bag of red seedless grapes.

"What's in the other bag?" Dave asked.

"I called Ilene," Mac said, referring to Dave's wife "and told her I'd make a chicken dish up at your house tonight. It's stuff for the recipe."

He popped the cork of the bottle. When he turned around Dave and I were standing behind him with wine glasses.

Pretty soon Dave and I were back at our desks while Mac was sitting in the stuffed chair.

Mac looked at me and said, "This has got to be the only job you've ever had where you're allowed to drink at your desk."

"Allowed?" Dave said. "It's expected."

The three of us laughed and raised our glasses in an impromptu toast. I sipped my wine. It was very good.

"Where'd we leave off?" Dave suddenly asked.

For a moment Mac didn't realize Dave was talking to him. When he did he looked confused for just a second.

"I think you were going to talk about how you think we've become a fascist country," I said.



John Silveira

Turning to Dave I said, "Isn't that the last of the things on his list that he said he thinks are leading to a dictatorship?"

"Yeah," Dave said.

"Oh, yeah," Mac said, and looked up at the ceiling as he thought for a moment. Then he began to nod. He took another sip of his wine.

"Do you really feel that we're going to become fascist?" I asked.

"We already have," he replied.

"How can you say that?" I asked. "If we were fascist, you wouldn't be able to say things like that."

"Things like what?" he asked.

"All the critical things you've said today."

"Why not?"

"Fascism means intolerance and concentration camps," I said.

What is fascism?

Mac thought again for a moment. Then he said, "What we should do is define our terms so we aren't talking about different things when we think we're talking about the same thing."

"What do you mean 'define terms'?" I asked.

"Define the 'isms.' Let's start out with communism. How would you define communism?" he asked.

I thought a second. "Well, in its theoretical sense, that's where private property has been eliminated—the state owns everything—and the state determines both the production and distribution of everything," I said.

"Good," he said. "Now, how would you define socialism?"

I was still thinking when Dave said, "I believe there are several kinds of socialism and, in reality, even communism can be defined as one of the types of socialism."

"That's right," Mac said. "Communism is actually the most extreme kind of socialism and it's where, as John said, the state owns and manages everything. Although it's never been perfectly implemented, where all private property was eliminated, it was implemented to a remarkable degree in the former USSR, modern China, Albania, North Korea, and several other countries. It turned out to be extremely inefficient, but one of its hallmarks is that all of the countries that adopted it have been dictatorships. Of course, Marx, the father of communism, advocated a dictatorship which he declared would eventually go away leaving a benign type of anarchy. But that's another story."

"Then what are the other types of socialism?" I asked.

"Well," Mac began, "one is state socialism, such as now exists in Sweden and was for a time a large part of the economic landscape in Great Britain. In state socialism the prime industries are owned by the

state, but otherwise there is private property including private businesses. But under state socialism if a business becomes too successful...or maybe I should say, is perceived as *too important*...it becomes a candidate to be taken over by the state.

"Last, there's fascism, sometimes called national socialism, in which most or all of the businesses and services remain in private hands but they are guided or directed by politicians and bureaucrats in the employ of the state.

"There are other variants of socialism, such as utopian socialism and guild socialism, among others, but basically, from an economic standpoint, there are just three main types: communism, where the state owns everything; state socialism, where the state owns the major or important industries; and national socialism, or fascism, where the state owns no industry, but in varying degrees controls what's otherwise private."

"Communism, socialism, and fascism," Dave said.

"That's right," Mac said. "I think you'd get most economists to agree these are workable definitions and it's pretty much historically accurate as far as socialist movements go."

"Then there's capitalism," Dave said.

"Yes. But whereas in the variants of socialism there are bureaucrats and politicians deciding the direction the economy should go in, in pure capitalism it's market forces that determine what happens. And, of course, unlike the various kinds of socialism, which are both economic and political theories, capitalism is just an economic theory."

"There's no 'capitalist party' ticket. No doctrine of capitalistic social thought," Dave said.

"No," Mac said. "And, as for fascism being about concentration camps and intolerance," he said looking at me, "you're thinking about the Nazis. Fascism was adopted by many

countries and Mussolini and the Italians were the first to institute it.

"The Germans—specifically, the Nazis—adopted it later and they were the ones who added the concentration camps. But the Nazis didn't need fascism to build concentration camps and concentration camps are not one of the defining characteristics of fascism any more than they are a defining characteristic of communism or capitalism.

"As far as I know, during World War II not only Germany, but two of the other combatants had concentration camps for their own citizens. Others may have had prisoner of war or P.O.W. camps, but only three had concentration camps."

"Which are the other two?" Dave asked.

"The former Soviet Union and the United States."

"What!" I said.

"The Soviet Union had them for political enemies of the state and malcontents. They were called labor camps or gulags. And the United States had two kind of concentration camps—internment camps for Japanese-Americans during the war, and Indian Reservations, which are the longest running concentration camps in the world."

"We spoke about that earlier," Dave said. (*The Coming American Dictatorship, Part IV, Issue No. 69, May/June 2001.*)

Mac nodded. "We did," he said.

I didn't say anything, but I still felt uncomfortable calling Indian Reservations concentration camps, though Mac assured me a great many Indians would agree with him.

He continued. "Today, we've equated fascism with Hitler and so-called right wing governments such as the military dictatorships in Argentina and Chile, as well as with the Nazi concentration camps of World War II. But I'd be surprised if one person in a hundred realized that fascism is simply an economic and political theory."

"But fascism is evil," I protested.

"To whom?" Mac asked. "To the average German living in Germany from 1933 to the end of World War II, neither National Socialism nor Hitler were evil. He was both a savior and a hero to millions. To the average Jew, to the average gypsy, to homosexuals, and political dissidents, and to much of the rest of the world, he was an evil tyrant. But not to most Germans."

"The same goes for Mussolini in Italy. He was, for a time, not only a hero in his own country, but admired by much of the world."

"But how can you call fascists socialists?" I asked. "Socialism is a left wing philosophy. Everyone knows fascism is a right wing philosophy."

"Right wing and left wing don't mean an awful lot," Mac said. "Initially, fascism was seen as a left wing ideology by those who saw themselves on the left. And since it was largely left-leaning people who were in power during World War II, they chose not to refer to the fascists as socialists any longer, so they lumped the fascists with the rest of their political enemies who were on the right."

"You're saying the terms are artificial?" I asked.

"Yes. It's like 'newspeak' in George Orwell's novel, *1984*, in which terms shift meanings overnight to suit political ends. It happened again recently. Western liberals now refer to Russia's old-line communists as 'right-wingers.' About 10 years ago they decided to distance themselves from them because the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' had become passé and democracy was now *in*. Immediately forgotten was that for decades Soviet communists—and by extension, Russian communists—along with their dictatorship, were the darlings of liberals in the West *because* they were the ultimate 'leftists.' Now that they were no longer popular, they were relegated to the right virtually

overnight. And just as was done in the novel *1984*, not one American news commentator noted the change. It was just as if it had always been that way."

"I remember when we talked about that before," Dave said. (See *What's left, what's right? What's liberal, what's conservative?*, Issue #52, July/August 1998.)

"But the truth is that, just as with Hitler and the Nazis, the old-line communists hadn't changed a bit. It was the Western liberals who had changed. So who knows what they're going to be calling left wing tomorrow."

"If you've never read the novel *1984*, you should. If you haven't read it in quite awhile, it's worth rereading now. You think that what happens in Oceania, the country of the protagonist, Winston Smith, could never happen here. But it does with alarming frequency."

"But if you think about it, the difference between left wing and right wing is artificial. Those on both the right and the left ask for more government control and more government intrusion; they just ask for it in different areas. It's the reason Libertarians have so much trouble recruiting from the ranks of Democrats and Republicans, because they both advocate some kinds of government presence in everyday life

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whereas Libertarians want the government out of their lives.

"The real difference in American politics is not between left and right or Democrat and Republicans in America. The real difference is between those who want government controls and those who do not. And there aren't too many in the latter camp, so you don't hear much of anything about them."

Dave got up, grabbed the bottle, and poured us all a little more wine.

"What was the attraction of fascism as opposed to other flavors of socialism?" Dave asked.

"Fascism's roots go back a long way. But it didn't become a systematic theory until around the time of World War I and it really didn't make much of an impact until the Depression of the 1930s. Then, many of its ideas, especially its economic ideas of leaving production in private

hands while directing it by the state, swept the world.”

“Why did it take hold then?” Dave persisted.

“Because of the Depression, people were looking for scapegoats and saviors, villains and heroes. They were looking for leaders who had—or claimed to have—solutions. Intellectuals, politicians, and bureaucrats loved the concept provided by fascist economic ideas: central planning without having to confiscate private property.

“So out of the debris of the Depression arose men like Roosevelt and Hitler. Each created the impression that he was ending the Depression within his country.”

“How can you compare Roosevelt to Hitler?” I asked. “Roosevelt ended the Depression.”

“If you look at the history of both men, neither one of them ever saw two seconds of a good economy during their tenures in office.”

“But Roosevelt ended the Depression,” I repeated.

“What are the hallmarks of a depression?” Mac asked.

“When massive amounts of people are thrown out of work,” I said.

“That’s one definition,” Mac said. “So, let’s work with it.” He stood up and took the *World Almanac and Book of Facts* for the year 2000 from one of the bookshelves in the office. First he perused the index, then he leafed through the pages.

“Here are the unemployment figures for various years: 1929—3.2%”

“That’s not depression figures,” I said.

“1930—8.7%.”

“That’s getting up there,” Dave said.

“1931—15.9%”

“Now we have depression,” I said. “But wasn’t Hoover still in office in 1931?”

Mac nodded. “Indeed he was. But now let’s hear the rest of the figures: 1932—23.6%. 1933—24.9%”

“Wow, those figures are really up there,” Dave said.

“It’s in March of 1933 that FDR takes office,” Mac said. “So his first year sees record unemployment.”

“Yeah, but he hadn’t had a chance to end it yet,” I said. “It was just his first year.”

Mac nodded again then continued to read: “1934—21.7%. That’s the end of his second year.

“His third year is 1935 and unemployment is at 20.1%.

“1936—16.9% This is an election year and FDR is voted back into office.

“1937—14.3%.”

“So, after five years the Depression goes on,” Dave said.

“But it’s getting better,” I said. “Unemployment was falling.”

Mac paused. “Yes, after five years in office unemployment had fallen to 1931 levels.”

He continued. “1938—19.0%”

“Wait a minute,” Dave said. “You mean unemployment went back up?”

“Yes. For all of his programs and policies, after six years in office, the Depression deepens again.

“1939—17.2%. 1940—14.6%. After eight years in office—as long as any President before him or since had served—he finally has unemployment back to what it was in Hoover’s second year in office.”

“Then why do they call it Hoover’s Depression?” Dave asked. “It’s beginning to sound like Roosevelt’s Depression.”

Mac shrugged.

I said nothing.

“There are no figures here for 1941,” he said and closed the *Almanac*, “but that’s the year we enter into World War II and we go into a wartime economy.

“So, at the beginning of his presidency there was unemployment and nothing to buy; then there was a wartime economy with people dying, but full employment—yet, there was still nothing to buy except for War

Bonds which were conceived to help take money out of circulation.”

“So what’s your point?” Dave asked.

“My point is that fascist economic ideas were sweeping the world and Franklin Roosevelt used them, Mussolini used them, Hitler used them. In fact, almost everybody but the communists used them. With fascist economics politicians didn’t have to nationalize industry, and private property could be left in private hands. But, at the same time, in this country Roosevelt laid the foundation for new and powerful federal bureaucracies that would begin to direct the economy and control the country.

“I also wanted to show that Roosevelt and his brand of socialism did not end the Depression, though he had adopted many of the fascist-like tools that were being developed at that time.”

“Tools such as...?” Dave asked and let his question hang there.

“Keynesian economics, which is essentially a fascist-type of economic theory, invented by the Englishman John Maynard Keynes. It was adopted by politicians and bureaucrats because it gave them something to do. It empowered them while, once again, leaving property in private hands.”

“How does Keynesian economic theory work?” Dave asked.

“The theory says the government must guide the economy through manipulation of the money supply and through fiscal programs. By adopting Keynesian ideas, governments in developed countries, such as the United States, were able to build huge bureaucracies to oversee it.”

“But I still wonder why fascism was adopted and not communism, like the Soviet Union adopted?” Dave asked.

“It was the problem of private property. Confiscation of private property by the state was easier in Russia where the overwhelming majority of

the population owned neither businesses nor real estate. But in countries like Italy, Germany, and the United States, communism wouldn't have gone over as well because of the numbers of people who owned private property. And in this country private property—at least back then—was an even bigger issue than in most European countries. This made fascism, which left property in private hands, palatable.”

I had been sitting at my computer doing a quick search on the Web for other things about fascism.

“Hey,” I interrupted, “one of the characteristics of fascism is nationalism. We don't have that,” I said triumphantly.

“Actually we do. Sometimes it's subtle, sometimes it's blatant. Do you remember the quote by the Clintons: ‘I don't understand how someone can say they love their country but hate their government.’? Or another by JFK: ‘Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.’?”

“The first quote identifies the government with the country. That's a hallmark of fascism. Our Founding Fathers understood what it was like to love their country while hating their government because, keep in mind, until July 4, 1776 they were Englishmen. To them their country and their government were separate issues. Today, hating your government while loving your country sounds like a contradiction because we've come to think of the two as one.

“The second quote, by JFK, ignores the possibility that this could be a nation of self-reliant individuals. It makes the assumption that the only choices available are between two types of socialism: that of the Swedes, and that of Mussolini and Hitler. The Swedes want to know what their country can do for them; the Nazis wanted to know what they could do for their country.

“Most of the Founding Fathers, the same people who wrote the *Constitution* and the *Bill of Rights*, would have thought both quotes were very European and not American at all.”

“So you're saying we really are nationalistic.”

“Yes, and although we have, at times, substituted the U.N. or the environment for the concept of ‘the state,’ make no mistake, they are only substitutions for some temporal power that is more important than the individual and to which the individual is always subject.”

“Do you think we're just getting used to it?” Dave asked.

“Of course we are. That's why the *Bill of Rights* makes so many of us uncomfortable now.”

“What do you mean?” I asked.

“The *Bill of Rights* is mostly about individuals and their rights. It puts the individual ahead of the state. People today have been conditioned to feel it's supposed to be the other way around.”

Who wants fascism?

“If, as you say, we're becoming fascist, who is it that wants it that way?” Dave asked.

“It seems like everybody does.”

“Not liberals,” I said. “They're the ones most opposed to fascism.”

“That's not true,” Mac said. They're only opposed to the *term* fascism. They're not opposed to its ideas. For years you've no doubt heard people—liberals in particular—say that what we need is a blend of socialism and capitalism. Well, that's exactly what fascist economic theory is: the means of production—capitalism—left in private hands, but directed by the government. However, we don't use the word ‘fascism’ because it fell out of favor due to Hitler and Mussolini during World War II.

“Today, instead of fascists, many who espouse fascist economic policies call themselves progressives, lib-

eral, greenies, environmentalists, corporate CEOs, the religious right, etc. None of them would dare call themselves fascists, even if they knew what fascism is. And, as I said before, I'll bet not one person in 100 knows what it is.”

“Well, you're kind of making sense here,” Dave said. “Everything from National Health Care to corporate subsidies is a blend of capitalism and socialism. But I guess I never thought too much about corporations wanting fascism. With each, companies remain private but under public control.”

Mac nodded again.

“How do business leaders see this?” Dave asked.

“The cry for government intervention in business, by businessmen, goes at least as far back as the so-called robber barons.”

“What do you mean?” Dave asked. “Why do you say ‘so-called’?”

“The way we're taught in schools today, in the 19th century various men such as John D. Rockefeller, J.D. Hill, and Cornelius Vanderbilt were getting rich by stifling business and fleecing the public. In truth, those men, and others like them, built their businesses up by running them efficiently, cutting prices, and driving their competition—which in many cases were government subsidized businesses—out of business.

“There's an excellent book on this by Burton W. Folsom titled *The Myth of the Robber Barons*. It clearly shows that the campaign against the so-called robber barons wasn't conducted by consumers, but by their competitors. It was other businessmen, who couldn't run their businesses efficiently, who cried to Congress to intervene.

“This was all supposedly done to help the consumer. But when companies like Standard Oil, which were supposedly preying on the public, were broken up, prices didn't fall, they went up.”

"So the roots of fascist-type economics in America go back much earlier than Mussolini and Hitler," Dave said.

"Yes," Mac answered.

"But there are still differences between what Mussolini and Hitler did and what American businesses wanted 100 years ago or what we want today," I said. "So it's not the same."

Mac shrugged. "Well, there's a difference between communist theory, the way Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels spelled it out, and what was practiced in the Soviet Union, China, North Korea, Albania, and numerous other places. The way each country adopted communism was unique to that country. But we never hesitated to call them all communist because the essential features of communism were there.

"And in the same way, Mussolini and Hitler practiced fascism differently, but I don't think anyone would say one or the other of them wasn't fascist.

"And in this country the features of fascism exist both economically and socially, but it's not exactly as practiced by the Germans or the Italians."

"So, in answer to the question, 'Who in America wants fascism...?'" Dave started to ask, and he left his question unfinished again. But we both knew what he was asking.

"Almost everyone," Mac answered.

"And you say that, even today, businesses want it, too?"

"Among the the most strident advocates of fascism are America's corporations."

"But businesses want capitalism," I said.

"Capitalism involves open markets and laissez-faire economic policies. In theory, it's the ultimate democracy and insists on private property and personal rights. But the way most businesses are run today often has little to do with capitalism because those companies want governmental

favours and governmental protections. The trade-off is that with those favours and protections come government intervention and government force.

"In truth, when businesses make the plea for open markets and laissez-faire economic policies, when they say they don't want government interference, what they really mean is that they want the government off *their* backs because *they* want to do something that's going to make *them* money. On the other hand, they often want and ask for regulations and intervention when they want to *limit competition*. They want the government to ensure that other businesses are less competitive, or have to pay tariffs which make their products more expensive, or if an entrepreneur wants to start up a new company that will compete with them, they want the bar set so high that there are too many regulatory hurdles to overcome or so startup costs are so high that the entrepreneur can't compete.

"Other times, they ask for a government subsidy because they can't operate efficiently."

"So corporations will invite government to intrude as long as it turns them a buck," Dave said.

"That's right. They'll even embrace government principles and ideas when they're wrong, if it will enhance their bottom line."

"Can you defend a statement like that?" I asked. "Can you give us an example of a corporation embracing a government principle that's wrong just to get rich?"

"Sure. In their book *Silencing Science*, authors Steven Milloy and Michael Gouch give a good example involving DuPont and CFCs.

"When chlorofluorocarbons—the gases more commonly called CFCs that used to be used as an aerosol propellant and in air conditioners—were cited as depleters of the ozone layer, the first reaction of DuPont Corporation was to investigate whether there's any evidence that the

ozone layer is in danger from CFCs. They did this because, along with several other companies, they made CFCs themselves and had a stake in selling them.

"What they discovered was that, though there were a lot of theories, there was no evidence to support the environmentalist's or government's claims. Or at least there was no evidence that would stand up to peer review among other scientists. But they knew that selling this argument was going to be difficult, especially since the media had already made up its mind that CFCs are a danger."

"So what did they do?" I said.

"They discovered something even more interesting. They held patents on gases that could be substituted for the CFCs. These new gases not only cost several times as much as CFCs, they also promised huge profits for the company because Dupont would be the sole source of the gases. So they not only gave in and were willing to stop the production of the CFCs, a product on which they did not have exclusive rights, they also became one of the loudest voices calling for the banning of CFCs. They knew that with government intervention, it would be impossible for competitors to sell much of the less expensive CFCs, thus ensuring Dupont both a monopoly and big profits."

"Rather than insisting that there be a scientific inquiry to determine the truth here, they went against their own scientific findings all for the bottom line?" Dave asked.

"DuPont, like any corporation, may use science to make its products, but it's not in the science business, and it's not in the business of selling truth. It's in business to make a profit, as well it should be.

"But don't blame just businessmen for this. Any time someone, whether it's an individual, a group, or a corporation, demands some kind of law or regulation be enacted to control

someone else, there are bureaucrats willing to step in and act on their behalf because this is how bureaucrats are empowered. This doesn't mean that everyone who wants an advantage provided to them gets their way, but it still happens with alarming frequency."

"Do you have other examples?" Dave asked.

"Farm subsidies which are supposed to benefit family farms are now laws benefitting agribusiness."

"But they also save family farms," I said.

"Yes, they do. But why? And are we supposed to save family businesses at public expense? Are we supposed to save every family-owned laundromat and gas station at public expense, too? If you can't run your laundromat or gas station competitively, then maybe you're in the wrong business. And that goes for farmers, too. Or are families that own farms somehow more sacrosanct than families that own gas stations?"

"But they grow our food," I said.

"In a country where we pay farmers *not* to grow things, there's a myth that unless we keep the most inefficient farmers in business we're going to starve," Mac said.

He continued. "Another example is our entire banking system, as it has been since 1933. It's a system of privately owned businesses run tightly under the direction of the federal government."

"Which is, according to the definition you've given us, fascist economics," Dave said.

Rights and crimes

"Well, you've made a case for the way fascism in this country may be infringing on our economic freedoms," Dave said. "What about our personal freedoms?"

Mac said, "First, keep in mind that your economic freedoms are part of your personal freedoms. Don't separate them out. Your economic free-

doms have to do with your property rights. And all socialistic economic theories infringe on your property rights to some extent.

"But beyond this, in government-directed societies, not only are businesses managed, there's the management of people with phony rights and phony crimes."

"What do you mean by that?" I asked.

"We spoke earlier about the creation of new 'legal' rights that are not protections against the government, but entitlements that must be supplied by fellow citizens. (*How the creation of new "legal" rights is destroying our real rights*, January/February 2001.) Of course, this must be managed by the government.

"In the same way we have other laws meant to manage people. Everything from zoning laws to helmet and seat belt laws are meant to allow the government to manage individuals."

"Are you saying this is another manifestation of fascism?" Dave asked.

"I'm saying this is a manifestation of all societies that are 'government managed' which includes all of the socialisms."

"Hold on," I said. "In cases like seat belt laws, the state has a good argument. All too often it's the state that has to take care of you, and you can't just opt out of system. So the state



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has a right to dictate your behavior in certain cases, like wearing seat belts, where you may otherwise become a financial burden to it."

"Then you must also believe the state has a right to gun confiscation."

"How's that?"

"Gunshot victims, whether by accident or by crime, may become wards of the state. If government can outlaw anything that might cost it money, the *Second Amendment* becomes moot.

"Overweight?" he asked, staring pointedly at my gut. "That's a cause of heart disease and a potential drain on the public treasury. If the government wants us in better shape so it can save money, it makes obesity a

crime. The state can then regulate what you eat and create forced exercise programs it will be a crime to avoid."

"Oh, don't be foolish," I said.

"Yesterday's foolishness becomes today's nightmares and crimes. There was a time when people would have laughed if you'd said ethnic slurs could become 'hate crimes' that resulted in stiffer prison sentences than physical assault, or that smoking on a plane could become a federal offense with jail time..."

"Or be fined for not wearing a seat belt," Dave said.

"What you've done, with your argument for seat belts," Mac continued, "is to put a price on our rights. If the government can find economic reasons, they're allowed to intrude in our lives. They create a system, make it illegal to opt out of it, then use that system against us. There's going to be more of it in the future."

"Make a prediction about that," Dave said.

Mac thought a second. "Today we laugh at the concept of the government forcing us to have a National ID Card that would be the equivalent of what the Nazis had when they insisted everyone 'have their papers.' But one day it will be a crime in this country not to have an ID Card on your person at all times."

"Are you saying that one day there won't be National ID Cards and the next they'll be throwing you in jail for not having one?" I asked.

"There'd be a revolt if they did it that way. So they won't institute them with prison sentences. They'll be instituted by bureaucrats. One day they'll institute them, and the next day you simply won't be able to get some services without the card. And day after day the card will become a requirement for more and more of the services you want, including opening a bank account, cashing a check, getting a driver's license, or getting a job. It's only after the overwhelming

majority of us get used to them that there will be penalties for not having one. And by that time no one will come to help you because it'll seem harmless. You'll be a crank for not submitting and a criminal for not having one.

"In fact," he continued, "There will come a time when you cannot get on the Internet, including the Web, without a national ID code on your computer. It'll be the ultimate cookie."

"Says who?" I asked.

"Says me. It's my second prediction."

"You mean you've heard about this coming?" he asked.

"No. But I'll make a bet, it's coming soon.

"You heard it here, first," he added.

I didn't say anything. I was flabbergasted. I couldn't believe he'd be saying things like this, but Dave was unfazed.

"The government has been looking for ways to control the Internet, and this is how they'll do it. And not only will you not be able to get on without an ID, it'll be a crime to misrepresent your identity. And I know plenty of people who will think that this is a great idea."

"How will it come about?" Dave asked.

"They'll institute it with a crisis. It'll be a war, a terrorist attack, a means to catch pedophiles, to track deadbeat dads, or something for the War on Drugs. Maybe they'll use a combination of things. But it will be some kind of crisis because that's the only way they'll be able to get around the resistance that computer users have shown to government intrusion so far."

"The users will be gulled into believing it's for their benefit," Dave said.

Mac nodded. "That's how these things are often done."

I wasn't going to let this seat belt thing slip by. "But it's stupid not to wear a seat belt," I said.

Mac looked at me. "Oh, I agree," he said. "But when did not taking care of yourself become a crime in the United States?"

"Well, I just think there are times the government has to step in."

"And that's what socialism, and in particular, fascism are all about. Every form of socialism demands some kind of people management to keep the bureaucracies that sustain it both busy and supported. It doesn't matter whether it's communism, state socialism, or national socialism, they all do it. And when they start managing you, your rights, freedoms, and liberties become secondary. In fact, they become privileges."

He waited for a response from me. But I didn't say anything for a moment.

Finally, he said. "Under fascism, the state is a hero. To those who go along with the new agenda the government is again a hero. For example, zoning laws which usurp property rights, bureaucracies such as the FDA, which now claim dominion over your body, environmental controls which have also made property rights secondary, and plans for a national ID system to keep track of us. They convince us they are either saving us from ourselves or they are saving us from our neighbors.

"Almost every time they 'solve our problems for us' we pay for it with more of our rights. And they will use any argument they can. In the case of seat belts and motorcycle helmets, they use an economic argument. But in environmental arguments they are saving the world.

"We are managed, yet private property seems to stay in place and individual rights *seem* to stay intact. It's classic fascism. We don't call it fascism, and that's supposed to make it okay."

"You're saying this is like George Orwell's *1984*," Dave said. "In *1984*, the government isn't concerned with reality, it just has to change the

appearance of reality by manipulating the common vocabulary.”

“That’s right,” Mac said. “That’s exactly what we’ve done: we’ve adopted fascism, but changed our vocabulary to hide it from ourselves.”

“But a lot of the things the government does, it does to protect our freedoms,” I said.

“Like what?” Dave asked me.

“Like instituting a National ID Card,” I said.

“What do you say?” Dave asked Mac. “What about times when the government is doing things to protect our freedoms?”

“It can’t,” he replied.

“What do you mean?” Dave asked.

“There’s been a subtle shift in belief in this country from a time when it was thought that protecting freedom was an individual responsibility to now, when it’s assumed that protecting freedom is a government function.”

“It should be both.” I said.

“It can’t be,” Mac replied. “Most of the freedoms we have are *freedoms from government*. George Washington said, ‘Government is not reason, it is not eloquence—it is force.’ Freedom of speech, freedom of worship, the right to keep and bear arms, the right to a jury trial, and a host of other things...every one of those is freedom from government intrusion. We can’t expect to depend on the potential oppressor to save us from himself. We, the citizens, must do that for ourselves.”

“When the government says it’s going to protect us, even when it says it’s protecting our freedoms, it always expects us to give up some of our freedoms as a price. And the freedoms we’re asked to give up are always the very freedoms meant to protect us *from* them.”

It was 5 p.m. and everyone else at the magazine was preparing to go home.

“We should get out of here,” Dave said and he started shutting down his computer.

I started shutting mine down, too.

Mac went to the refrigerator to get the wine.

“I’ll put that bag in my trunk,” I said. “It’s going to be regarded as an open container if we get stopped.”

“I was wondering what to do with it,” Mac said. “I guess this means you’ll be going up to Dave’s house and joining us for supper.”

“I wouldn’t miss it for the world,” I said. I know how Mac cooks.

Is there a solution?

“What can we do about it?” Dave suddenly asked.

“About fascism?” Mac asked.

Dave nodded. “That and the possibility of a dictatorship in this country.”

“The trouble is, almost all of us now have a stake in keeping things the way they are. And though we’ve put a lot of things in place to make a dictatorship possible, no one really wants to change the status quo. We’re afraid to.”

“But there’s got to be something,” Dave said.

“You’ve been asking for solutions to each of these things I’ve said are possible threats to our freedoms, from the government stacking of juries to presidential rule by Executive Orders. And I keep suggesting possible solutions. But neither of you have pointed to the obvious: that each problem we’ve talked about is just a component of the forces that are threatening to bring on a dictatorship. Solving one or two of the problems may help us, but we actually need to solve many problems if we’re going to stop going down the road to a dictatorship.”

“But we’ve shown no willingness to solve them. There are small bands of people here and there who see the problems and try to do something, but for ever one who does, there are 30 or

40 who are at home watching TV, and they have no interest in the problems, or they like the way things are going and may have a stake in keeping it this way.

“Almost everything we’ve talked about here since early this morning (see *Issue 66, November/December 2000 when this series started*) is due to the fact that we have surrendered our republican form of government, our personal freedoms, and capitalism to fascism. It’s actually over. I truly believe there’s really nothing we can do. We could if we *really* wanted to, but we don’t. Like the end of a Stephen King horror story, it seems as if escape is right around the corner, but in the last line of the last chapter we discover the horror just goes on and on and on.”

“But you’ve been giving solutions all day to how we can ensure fair trials, how we can end the tyranny of Executive Orders, how we can make bureaucracies accountable, how we can regain our lost rights. What can we do about fascism?” Dave asked.

Mac thought long and hard about this.

“Nothing,” he finally said.

“Nothing?” Dave asked.

“Think about it,” Mac said. “Think about the last 68 years, ever since Roosevelt was elected and we began the descent toward a fascist state. Think about all the changes that have come about, that have eroded our rights, even before 1933, that have occurred in spite of our Constitution—which is, incidentally, the only document ever adopted by a nation that put the individual ahead of the state.”

“In fact, think about the *Constitution* and how it is the most anti-government document ever written. It was written by the citizens, not some king, philosopher, or a bunch of bureaucrats. It was a document written by free men, some of whom had to wrestle with their consciences because we still were a nation that

permitted slavery and not all men were free, that had still not given full freedom to its women, and yet they wrote a document that depended on a nation of free citizens.

"And while you think about that, also think about how all of these changes in our system have come about without any changes to that document. We've lost our rights without altering or repealing the *Bill of Rights*; the federal government's power has expanded without ever amending Section I, Article 8, which put restraints on that government. The President now has powers to issue decrees and wage war without consulting either the legislature or the people, and our rights are no longer defended by the people, but are *interpreted* by another branch of the government itself—the courts.

"Almost no one complains about these changes. If you do, you're considered a paranoid nut or an extremist. Even that institution that calls itself the Fifth Estate—the press—no longer holds the feet of politicians and bureaucrats to the fire for trampling on that hallowed document. In fact, they usually encourage it. The press, above all, seems to lead the charge against individual freedoms.

"Look at the stake the bureaucracy, the corporations, and the two major political parties have in at least maintaining the status quo, never mind trampling on our rights even more. Tell me how you realistically think there's a possibility of change for the better?

"Deep down inside I would say there is no solution. We are now a fascist country and things are not ever going to get any better, they'll only get worse."

"You really don't think we can reverse it?" Dave asked.

Mac shook his head. "I've said it before and I'll say it again: someday historians will look back at the late and great United States and wonder how, as we were losing it all, we didn't see it happening. They'll won-

der how we let freedom slip through our fingers."

Who's to blame

"So, who's to blame for all of this?" Dave asked.

"We are," Mac said. "We're the boogymen. We can't really blame the politicians or the bureaucrats. Sometimes they responded to our demands, other times they responded to demands by special interest groups. But all the while we sat at home watching television instead of raising a stink.

"And I'll admit that at other times, the politicians and bureaucrats did things unilaterally to enhance their own powers and, still, we sat home and kept watching our TV programs.

"All we've ever needed to retain our freedoms and ensure a constitutional government, all we ever had to do to have stopped what may one day become the American dictatorship, was to maintain our vigilance. But we didn't. And we don't now.

"On the other hand, maybe fascism isn't so bad. Maybe freedom is overrated. Maybe individual responsibility is an illusion. Maybe all those things we believed about ourselves, those things that we believed set us apart from the rest of the world, as well as from all of the people who have ever lived in history—things like individual freedom, self-reliance, and individual responsibility—are just myths. Maybe it's time for us to join the rest of the world and the rest of history, where rights and freedoms were dispensed by government and bureaucrats. Maybe we should just stop kidding ourselves."

With that, we left the office and headed up to Dave's. I remember that it started raining, yet all day long there hadn't seemed to be a cloud in the sky. Δ

This concludes *The Coming American Dictatorship* series. We at BHM hope you have enjoyed it. If you've missed any of the first seven installments, you can go to page 89 and order the *entire* series either on CD-ROM or in its printed version. Δ

The *Coming American Dictatorship* was started almost a year and a half ago in the November/December 2000 issue of *Backwoods Home Magazine*. Astute readers realize that the entire eight parts are a conversation that takes place over one day in the summer of 2000, long before the events of September 11, 2001 took place.

Throughout this series we have pointed out that during times of crises, governments (including our own) have stepped in with "emergency measures" that curtail or deprive us of our freedoms. We have warned that in the future our own government would not hesitate to use new crises to deprive us of even more of our freedoms.

With the new anti-terrorism bill recently passed by Congress, we believe the march toward a dictatorship has just accelerated. Ironically, none of the provisions in the bill would have done anything to prevent the hijackings. More measures and more bills are in the pipeline, including a bill to institute a National ID Card. J.E.S.



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How do you live without electricity

By Anita Evangelista

It's going to happen. Sooner or later, the power will go off, and you won't know when (or if) it will come back on. This doesn't have to be the work of evil-doers, either. It could be a sudden ice storm that brings down the power lines. It could result from other severe weather such as a tornado or hurricane, or from a disruption caused by faulty power company equipment, or even something as simple as a tree branch falling on your own personal segment of the grid. The effect is the same: everything electrical in your home stops working.

For most modern Americans, the loss of power means the complete loss of normalcy. Their lifestyle is so dependent upon the grid's constancy that they do not know how to function without it. How do you cook a meal if your gas stove has an electric ignition? How do your children find their way to the bathroom at night if the light switches don't work? How do you keep warm if your wood heat is moved through ducts by an electric fan? What do you do with a freezer full of expensive meat? How do you find out what is happening in your area with the TV and radio silent? What will you drink if your water comes from a system dependent on electrical pumps?

These are questions that both the Red Cross and Federal Emergency

Management Agency are asking people to seriously consider. Both of these agencies have suggested that preparations for three days without power are prudent commonsense actions that all Americans should now undertake.

We'll look at these issues in the broad context of living without access to the grid, whether you've chosen to separate from it or whether the choice is made for you by outside forces. What you can do now to mitigate your difficulties if the power goes off in the future, and what you can do then to help keep your situation under control, will be the focus of this article.

Remember, too, that an important principle in all preparations is that you maintain as much "normalcy" in your lifestyle as possible. For example, if television is part of your relaxation and unwinding process, don't assume you can easily do without it. The closer you can keep your daily routines to "the norm" for your family, the more easily you can deal with power outages.

There are five primary areas that are easily disrupted if the power goes off. Each of these is critical to daily survival, as well, so when making preparations for emergencies keep these in mind. In order of importance, they are: **light**, **water**, **cooking**, **heating/cooling**, and **communication**.

Light

While living on our Ozark farm without the grid, we spent some time rising with the sun and going to bed when the sun set. This would probably have been a pretty healthy way to live, if everyone else in the world did the same thing. Our children's bathroom needs didn't stop when the sun went down, our neighbors figured that nighttime visits weren't out of the ordinary, and those midnight raids on the pantry for crackers and peanut butter turned into fumble-fests. Sometimes the barking of our livestock guardian dogs meant strange predators were too close for comfort, somewhere in the countryside darkness. Light is the most important item on our Big Five list because without light we are not able to efficiently carry on the other activities of daily living.

The most simple and familiar form of emergency lighting is a **flashlight**. Do you have one that you could find in the dark, right now? If so, congratulations. You are among a very small percentage of Americans. Better yet if you have one for each member of your family, with fresh batteries, plus three extra sets of batteries for each flashlight. That should be your minimum "safe" number. Store your flashlight where you can quickly reach it in the dark night—under the mattress of your bed, for example. Each child old enough to walk should

also have his or her own flashlight, and be taught how to use it.

Flashlights range in price from the 79 cent cheapie to the fancy multi-function \$80 special. Consider a small 2-AA battery flashlight with a halogen bulb. These cost about \$4-5 each, give an excellent clear white light, and are easily portable in a pocket or purse. Additionally, when we discuss communications later in the article, the most common battery used in these devices is also the AA, so your life will be simplified if you stick primarily to one type of battery and don't have to buy various odd sizes for different needs.

Batteries wear out rapidly if your flashlights are used continuously: figure two changes per week of regular use. Alkaline batteries last longer, give a more powerful light, but cost more than regular batteries. Most rechargeable batteries are suitable for flashlights, but should be recharged

when the light begins to dim a little. Don't let them get completely drained. This means you would need several sets of rechargables for each flashlight (some would be recharging while you use the others).

Recharging can be done by means of a charger plugged into your car's cigarette lighter outlet. These DC-powered rechargers can be found at auto supply stores and at Radio Shack for about \$30 or less. Solar rechargers work slower but produce the same results for about \$30.

Candles are available, slightly used, at garage sales and thrift stores (5 cents to 10 cents each or less), and some outlet stores like Big Lots have new candles for 25 cents. We have a cardboard box weighing 35 pounds that is filled with various sizes and shapes of candles. This would be about a year's supply for my family. We've acquired them gradually, every time we found them inexpensively.

They never go bad! Candles are easy to use and familiar. Most of us can adjust to using candles easily. The light is soft and wavering. You'll need at least three candles if you hope to read by the light. If you have small children or indoor pets, care must be taken where you place them. Metal candle holders that hang on walls are probably the safest. Remember to place a heat proof plate underneath the holder to catch drippings. Save your wax drippings, too, to make more candles later.

Oil (kerosene) lamps produce a steadier light than candles. Department store oil lamps cost about \$10 each and come in attractive styles. Lamp oil is about \$3 per liter. A typical lamp will burn one to two cups of oil per night, so you would use about two liters each week per lamp. The light from these lamps is not quite adequate to read by unless it is placed very close, and the light

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does waver a little. A single lamp can provide enough light in a room so that you don't bump into furniture, but two or three may be needed to provide good functional light. As with candles, if you have children, these lamps need to be placed securely and out of reach. The smell of burning oil (kerosene) can get heavy in a closed room so keep ventilation open. Keep an extra set of wicks (\$2) and chimneys (\$3) in case of breakage.

The Cadillac of oil lamps is the **Aladdin Lamp**. These run from \$60 up to several hundred each. The light given off is as good as a 60-watt bulb, clear, and unwavering. You can read or do needlepoint by the light of one lamp. These burn the same oil or



A "shepherd" or "camp" stove offered by Cabela's catalog. It has a detachable shelf on the right, detachable five-gallon hot water tank on the left, and an oven sitting above the stove body. The whole thing breaks down and is portable. It cooks very nicely, too. Costs about \$500 for all components, excluding stove pipes, and it can be bought piecemeal. The light in the upper left-hand photo is a lit oil lamp, placed to give light when using the stove.



Cooking bread outdoors in a Dutch Oven

kerosene as typical lamps, but because they burn hotter, there is much less odor. Position these lamps so that they cannot accidentally be overturned, and so that the intense heat coming from the chimney won't ignite something. Purchase an additional "mantle" (the light-giving portion of the lamp - \$3), and chimney (\$15), as backups.

Solar powered lamps (\$80-\$120) are typically small fluorescents, and can be run off of battery systems. It may take more than one day of bright sunlight to recharge these lamps, so you may need several—one to use, while others are recharging. The light is white and clear, good for area-lighting, and rather difficult to read by. Have extra fluorescent bulbs on hand, too.

Don't forget to store matches!

Water

If you live in a town or city, the loss of power to homes and businesses probably will not immediately affect your water pressure, but it could affect the purification process or allow reverse seepage of contaminants into the lines. If, instead, your water comes from an electrically-powered home water pump, your

water stops flowing the moment the power does. Either way, with the loss of power comes the loss of water (or, at least, clean water). Water that is free of bacteria and contaminants is so crucial to our survival that it should be a special concern in your preparations.

The easiest way to guarantee quality water is to store it right now. The important question is: how much? Both Red Cross and FEMA suggest a minimum of one gallon per day per person. This is an absolute minimum, and covers only your real drinking and cooking needs; bathing is out of the question.

The typical American currently uses around 70 gallons a day, taking a nice long hot shower, flushing the toilet several times, washing a load of laundry, letting the water run while brushing teeth, and for cooking and drinking. In a short-term emergency situation, only drinking and cooking water is crucial, but if that short-term incident drags out to weeks or months, daily consumption would rise to include bathing and clothes washing. And this presumes that the family has prepared a sanitary "outhouse," so flushing isn't needed. In that case, 5-10 gallons per day per person would

be a more reasonable amount, with a weekly communal bath becoming the routine.

One to three-gallon jugs, direct from the supermarket, run about 60 cents to \$2; these store easily under cabinets and counters. A few tucked into the freezer will help keep things cold if the power goes off. You can also store water inexpensively in large, covered plastic trash cans; they hold 36 to 55 gallons each. Refresh the water every two weeks, so it will be ready in case the power goes off. Kiddie swimming pools—a 12-foot wide, 36-inch deep pool holds 2500 gallons and costs about \$250—also make excellent above-ground holding tanks. Buy a pool cover, as well, to keep bugs out.

Farm supply stores often sell “water tanks” made of heavy grade plastic. These can be partially buried underground to keep water cooler and less susceptible to mold and bacteria. These run about \$1 per gallon of holding capacity, so a 350-gallon tank new will cost \$350. Plan to filter and purify the water before use.

Collecting water can be done by hand with 5-gallon plastic buckets if you live near a river or stream (it *must* be filtered and purified before use). You can also divert rainwater off your roof, through the rain gutters and downspouts into plastic trashcans. If you live in the Midwest, Northwest, or East Coast, rainfall is adequate to make this your primary backup water source. West Coast, high desert, and mountain areas, though, won’t have sufficient rainfall to make this a reliable source.

A drilled well with an electric pump can be retrofitted with a plastic hand-pump for about \$400 - \$600. These systems sit side-by-side with your electric pump down the same well-shaft, and can be put to use any time the power is off. Typical delivery is about 2 gallons per minute, and pumping strength varies from 11 to

20 pounds—a good but not exhausting workout.

Water can be purified inexpensively. Fifteen drops of bleach (plain unscented) per gallon of water costs less than 1 penny, and ¼ cup of hydrogen peroxide (3%) per gallon will also destroy bacteria. Twenty minutes of a hard, rolling boil will, too. Bleach is effective against both cholera and typhoid and has kept American water supplies safe for decades. The chlorine taste can be easily removed with a charcoal filter system (such as Brita Pitcher or Pur brands for home use, about \$30).

British Berkefeld water filters, along with various other brands, are more expensive (\$150-\$250), but can filter and purify water indefinitely. Both eliminate bacteria, contaminants, and off-flavors. We’ve used a “Big Berkey” for four or five years, and it is a very reliable gravity-fed system. When shopping for filters, if they only offer “better taste” they won’t protect you from bacterial contaminants.

Noah Water System’s travel companion will work great in case of a power outage, or your water supply becomes undrinkable. The Trekker is a portable water purification unit. With the Trekker you can get water from any river, lake, or pond. It’s small enough to carry like a briefcase.

Cooking

A person can survive indefinitely opening cold cans of beans for meals, but it wouldn’t be a very satisfying existence. In times of crisis, a hot meal goes a long way toward soothing the day’s troubles. The simplest way to heat a meal is the Boy Scout method: a couple of bricks or rocks set around a small outdoor fire, with the bean can propped over the flames. It’s low cost, and it works. However, the cook doesn’t have much control over the outcome.

Outdoor cooking of all kinds, including **grilling** and **barbecuing**,

all work during emergency situations, provided you have the charcoal or wood (and matches!) needed to get the heat going. These are familiar methods, too, so family members don’t have to make a huge leap to accept these foods. It’s difficult to cook much more than meats and a few firm vegetables over open heat like this, though. Also, never use these devices in a confined space, as they emit carbon monoxide.

“**Campfire**” cooking can lend itself to some baking, if you also have a cast iron Dutch Oven—a large, heavy, cast iron covered pot. Place a well-kneaded pound of bread dough into a heavily-greased or oiled Dutch Oven and put the cover in position. Make a hole or pot-sized well in the ash near the fire, and line this with glowing coals. Put about an inch of ash over the coals, and place the Dutch Oven into this. Now, pile about an inch of hot ash around the oven and cover with glowing coals, then another layer of ash to keep the heat in. Uncover and check your bread in about 35 minutes, it should be done.

Propane and **butane camp stoves** are so much like ordinary home stoves that there is no difference in the cooking results. Portable RV 2-burner propane stoves are often available used—mine cost \$5 at a garage sale—and can even do pressure canning because the heat is consistent and reliable. A typical 18-gallon propane cylinder, the kind used for barbecues, costs around \$30 new, and a propane fillup is about \$7. This will last for nearly a month of daily use. You’ll also need a feeder hose and pressure regulator for the stove, which can be prepared by your propane dealer for \$20 or so.

Butane stoves are also portable and run off of a cylinder of the same kind of butane that is used in cigarette lighters. These stoves are \$80-90 new, and cylinders are \$5 and last for 8 hours of cooking.

General camp stoves (around \$65 at department stores) operate on “stove fuel” (basically, propane in a small 1-pound cylinder - \$3). A cylinder lasts for around 8 hours of cooking. You can also find camp stoves that will cook off of unleaded gasoline, and there are some that are “multi-fuel,” using either kerosene or gasoline—handy in case of a shortage of one fuel or the other. Use outdoors or on a covered porch to prevent carbon monoxide buildup in your home.

Solar cooking is another option, if you have plenty of unobstructed sunlight and someone who is willing to adjust the cooker to face the sun every half hour or so. A **solar oven** need be no more fancy than a set of nested cardboard boxes painted flat black on the inside with tempura colors, a sheet of window glass, and some aluminum foil glued to cardboard panels. Total cost for this, if you can scrounge leftover glass and cardboard, is about \$1.

Place your food in a covered lightweight pan inside the box, prop it so the entire interior is exposed to the sunlight (about a 45-degree angle), cover with the sheet of glass (and tape the glass so it won't slide), then prop the aluminum foil panels so that they reflect more sunlight down into the box. Move the box every 30 minutes so it maintains an even temperature. It will get hot fast, easily up to 325 degrees, and hold the heat as

long as it faces the sun. Remember to use potholders when removing your foods! Our first solar oven had a black plastic trash bag as a heat-absorbing inner surface; it worked superbly until the plastic actually melted.

Keeping foods cool if the power goes out can be as simple as looking for shade, even under a tree. Some Ozarkers have partially buried old broken freezers in the shade of backyard trees, storing grains and winter vegetables inside. During the winter, your parked car will stay at the same temperature as the outside air—below freezing on those cold nights—so you can store frozen goods there safely. During the daylight hours, the car interior will heat up, though, if it's in the sun. Park it in the shade of the house, or cover the windows and roof with a blanket to keep the interior cool.

Kerosene refrigerator/freezers are alternative appliances that will continue to function with the power off because they are “powered” by kerosene. Their cooling and freezing capacity is exactly the same as a regular refrigerator, and they come in the same colors. Typically, they are a little smaller than conventional ‘fridges and cost up to \$1500, but they'll last for decades with care.

Portable battery-powered refrigerators that keep your foods 40-degrees cooler than outside temperatures are available at most department store sporting-goods sections (\$90). These run off of both DC and AC power, so they can be plugged into your car battery through the cigarette lighter outlet or into a solar power system.

What about that freezer full of expensive meat if the power goes off? First step is to cover the freezer with blankets to help retain the cold. Then, find dry ice (if everyone else in your town hasn't already bought out

the supply). Blanket coverings will keep a full freezer frozen for two days, and the addition of dry ice will prolong that to three or four days.

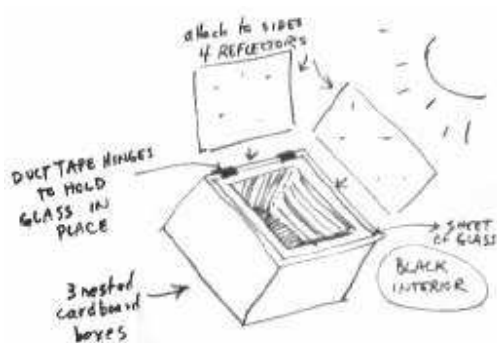
If power stays off, it's time to eat and time to can the meat remaining. Canning low-acid foods like meat calls for a pressure canner (\$90), canning jars (\$6 for 12), a source of consistent heat (like a propane RV stove), and some skill. In considering your time requirements, it took me two days of steady canning to put a 230-pound pig into jars. Each quart jar holds 3 pounds of meat.

Heating and cooling

It's a funny thing that even though we know winter is coming, we put off cutting our wood until after the first really cold night has chilled the house below comfort levels. But with the instability in the world today, it is sensible, and reasonable, to prepare well in advance of season changes. Putting in supplies a year ahead of time is a traditional farm practice, and it gives a cushion of safety against uncertain conditions.

Woodstove heating is more common, and comfortable to use, than it was two decades ago. New wood heaters run from \$100 to several thousands, depending on materials, craftsmanship, and beauty. Better stoves hold heat longer and may have interior baffles that let you use less wood to produce more heat. Even so, the most basic metal-drum-turned-stove also works to heat a room or a house.

Heating a 3-bedroom home that is moderately insulated will use about 8-12 cords of wood throughout the winter. The size of a cord (sometimes called a “rick” or a “rank”) is not standardized from region to region, but typically will be about 8' x 8' x 2', roughly a pickup truck bed loaded even with the top of the sides. Prices will vary between \$65 per cord to \$150, depending on the region and type of wood. Hardwoods, such as



A solar oven design made with cardboard boxes, aluminum foil, and a piece of window glass. Interior of the box is flat black paint.

oak and walnut, and fruitwoods like apple and pear, burn better and longer than softwoods like poplar. Don't use resinous woods, such as the pines, cedars, and spruces for the main heating—only as firestarters—because they burn too hot and fast and generate creosote. Better home insulation and better quality hardwoods will decrease the amount of wood you need to use.

If you plan to secure and cut your own firewood, be willing to acquire a good-quality chainsaw—any that cost below \$200 will only give you grief. Keep an extra chain on hand. Use safety precautions, too: wear ear and eye protectors, heavy gloves, and don't chainsaw alone. Cutting your own wood will decrease your heating costs significantly, but increase your labor. It typically takes us a full week of constant work to put up a winter's worth of wood.

Woodstoves require heat-proof surfaces surrounding them, an insulated chimney pipe (about \$90 per 3-foot section), and some building skills in order to install. Installation costs can equal or surpass the cost of the stove itself. Chimneys need to be thoroughly cleaned of the black crusty buildup, creosote, at least twice each year (and more often if you use the stove continuously).

Propane heaters that don't need venting to outdoors are a relatively new product. A plain one (\$200) can be mounted on the wall in the home's main room, or more fancy models that look like built-in fireplaces complete with fake logs (\$450) are available. You will need a propane tank, regulator, and appropriate copper lines, but these will all be installed by your propane company for a small charge. Propane has varied widely in cost from year to year, but typically runs around \$0.95 to \$1.30 per gallon.

Kerosene heaters (\$120) are free-standing units that burn kerosene in a way that is something like a lamp—it

uses a wick system and flames to provide heat. These are best used in areas that can be easily ventilated, because of the potential for buildup of carbon monoxide. Kerosene has a strong odor, as well. Kerosene costs about \$1 per gallon or less (in quantity).

Solar heat can be “grabbed” anytime the light from the sun hits your house. Even in the dead of winter, the south-facing walls will feel noticeably warmer than the shaded north-facing ones. You can “store” the sun's heat in any surface. Ceramic floor tiles, for instance, are excellent at retaining heat. So will a flat-black painted covered plastic trash can filled with water. If these surfaces are exposed to sunlight, say, indoors next to a south-facing window, they will absorb heat during the day. At night, with the window curtains closed, the surface will release heat slowly and steadily into the house.

One of the most efficient ways to heat is something else we have forgotten in the past 50 years—close off rooms that are not being used. If doors aren't available, you can hang curtains in doorways (or even tack up a blanket, in a pinch), and keep your heat restricted to the room you are actually in. In an emergency situation, you can curtain up a room and set up a tent-like “den” for the family to snuggle in under blankets. Body heat alone will keep the den's interior comfortable.

Cooling a residence during a hot summer requires just as much thought and advance planning as winter heating does. Battery and solar-powered fans help keep air moving, windows can be shaded by fast-growing vines and pole beans, and—planning way ahead—fast-growing trees like poplars can be planted on the house's south side to shade the yard.

In areas where wind blows routinely in the summer, you can soak a sheet, ring it out, and hang it in front of a breezy window. The air passing

through the window is cooled as it moves against the wet sheet, and helps to cool the house. Remember that heat rises, so make it easy for too-hot air to escape from the attic and upper floors by opening windows and vents.

Communications

In a time of distress, keeping in contact with family and knowing about local and national situations is important to maintaining both continuity and confidence. In general, telephone systems are on a different system than the electrical power grid, but they can be disrupted if there are earth movements or as the result of terrorist activities.

During the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989, we kept informed about the damages by watching a 4-inch black and white TV set (bought used for \$25) that was plugged into our car battery through the cigarette lighter. At night, we heard reports from the BBC via a 4-AA battery powered shortwave radio (\$70 from Radio Shack). I consider these two devices—shortwave and TV—the required minimum communication/information devices during a crisis, especially if the phone system is down.

Satellite internet hookups, using a battery-powered laptop, could be an excellent communication tool, both for accessing news and for staying in touch with friends and colleagues by email.

Citizens Band (CB) radios are excellent tools, as well. These portable devices can be carried with you into the field and used to stay in contact with neighbors and family when you are away from the house. Basic models run \$60—you'll need at least two—and ones with greater ranges and features are more costly. They'll run on 6 to 8 (or more) AA batteries.

“Family Radios” are FM-band devices that have a short range, about

¼ mile (\$60 for a pair). These are handy for keeping family in contact during outings, when traveling in a caravan, or when one member needs to go out to the barn during a storm. They run on 2 AA batteries.

Keeping things normal

Even though circumstances may change in the world, we can choose how we wish to react. We can live in a state of helpless anxiety—or control what we can. We can control our responses, in part, by maintaining as much normalcy in our lives as possible.

If your family relaxes in the evenings with a video, plan to continue doing that. Acquire a battery-powered TV/VCR combination, and make sure you have enough power sources to keep that going for at least two weeks. (If things get dicey, you can wean off the system in two weeks.) A cassette player or CD player with external speakers can provide relaxation and entertainment, and they run off of AA batteries as well.

Children have difficulty adjusting to sudden changes in their environment, so if you expect them to play board games if the power goes out, they should be comfortable with board games now. Keep routines consistent, arising at the usual time in the morning and going to bed as you have in the past. Prepare familiar meals with foods everyone enjoys. Have “fun foods” and goodies on hand. Remember to reach out to your neighbors and older folks who live

nearby, and provide extras to help them, as well.

Use the knowledge you’ve gained, and your experience with non-electric living, to make your neighborhood a more secure and adaptable place.

Resources

Aladdin Lamps: Lehman’s carries an excellent selection, plus many non-electric items.

Lehman’s, P.O. Box 41, 4779 Kidron Rd., Kidron, OH 44636
www.lehmans.com, 330-857-1330

British Berkefeld water filters:

Noah Water Systems, Inc., 46373 Galway Dr., Novi, MI 48374

www.noahwater.com, 877-356-6624

New Millennium Concepts, LTD., P.O. Box 201411, Arlington, TX 76006

www.bigberkey.com, 888-803-4438

Hand pumps: A websearch can find many manufacturers and sellers. Two are:

Kansas Wind Power, 13569 214th Rd., Holton, KS 66436

www.kansaswindpower.net

785-364-4407

Ready Made Resources, 239 Cagle Rd., Tellico Plains, TN 37385

www.readymaderesources.com

800-627-3809

(Anita Evangelista is the author of *Living Without Electricity and Liking It*, and several other useful books, all available from *Backwoods Home Magazine*.) Δ

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THE IRREVERENT JOKE PAGE

(Believing it is important for people to be able to laugh at themselves, this is a continuing feature in *Backwoods Home Magazine*. We invite readers to submit any jokes you'd like to share to BHM, P.O. Box 712, Gold Beach, OR 97444. There is no payment for jokes used.)

Poland has joined the war. Apparently the Polish army has surrounded a department store in Warsaw. They are acting on a tip that bed Linen is on the second floor.

Q: What do Osama bin Laden and General Custer have in common?

A: They both want to know where those Tomahawks are coming from.

Q: How do you play Taliban bingo?

A: B-52...F-16...B-1...

The devil visited a lawyer's office and made him an offer. "I can arrange some things for you," the devil said. "I'll increase your income five-fold; your partners will love you; your clients will respect you; you'll have four months of vacation each year and live to be a hundred. All I require in return is that your wife's soul, your children's souls, and their children's souls rot in hell for eternity." The lawyer thought for a moment. "Okay, what's the catch?" he asked.

Q: If you are stranded on a desert island with Adolph Hitler, Osama bin Laden, and a lawyer, and you have a gun with only two bullets, what do you do?

A: Shoot the lawyer twice.

Q: What's the problem with lawyer jokes?

A: Lawyers don't think they're funny, and no one else thinks they're jokes.

A gang of robbers broke into a lawyer's club by mistake. The old legal lions gave them a fight for their life and their money. The gang was very happy to escape.

"It ain't so bad," one crook noted. "We got \$25 between us."

The boss screamed: "I warned you to stay clear of lawyers—we had \$100 when we broke in!"

Yesterday, scientists in the United States revealed that beer contains small traces of female hormones.

To prove their theory, they fed one hundred men twelve pints of beer and observed that 100% of them started talking nonsense and couldn't drive.

A drunken man gets on the bus late one night, staggers up the aisle, and sits next to an elderly woman.

She looks the man up and down and says, "I've got news for you. You're going straight to hell!"

The man jumps up out of his seat and shouts, "Man, I'm on the wrong bus!"

A man walks into a pub and sits down next to a man with a dog at his feet. "Does your dog bite?" "No."

A few minutes later the dog takes a huge chunk out of his leg.

"I thought you said your dog didn't bite!" the man says indignantly.

"That's not my dog."

A reporter outside of a courtroom asked a defendant clad only in a barrel: "Oh, I see your attorney lost the case!" The defendant answered, "No, we won."

Q: What is a criminal lawyer?

A: Redundant.

Q: Why are husbands like lawn mowers?

A: They're hard to get started, emit foul odors, and don't work half the time.

Q: How do men sort their laundry?

A: "Filthy" and "Filthy but Wearable."

Q: How does a man show he's planning for the future?

A: He buys two cases of beer instead of one.

Lawyer: "Judge, I wish to appeal my client's case on the basis of newly discovered evidence."

Judge: "And what is the nature of the new evidence?"

Lawyer: "Judge, I discovered that my client still has \$500 left."

Ask Jackie

Power pole log homes, poison oak, elk stew, canning meat, surviving the first year, horseradish, and more

I read an article in your July/August issue pertaining to building your own log home. I found the article very interesting and I have a question. I have access to PG&E poles and would like to ask if you know any drawbacks in using these poles for construction of a home. One of my concerns is creasote within the poles.

Leonard Jay
Petaluma, CA

These used power poles make a pretty nice home. In fact, we might be using some to build our new home in the woods if we don't have enough good straight pine on our new homestead. The usual problem is finding enough poles for the whole house.

No, creasote isn't usually much of a problem with these used poles. By the time a builder gets hold of them, it's been many, many years since they were treated with creasote, and the smell has "worn off".

Then, after you've built your home, you will be treating both the inside and outside with a log sealant which will not only protect your logs, but will effectively seal in any remaining odor or chemical fumes. I'd much rather live in a home built of old power poles than a "modern" home built with toxic glues, foam rubber, etc., as most are today.

I was recently in Minnesota after traveling to Upper Michigan to help celebrate my dad's 90th birthday, and I stopped in to see some old friends. David and Sandy had just finished remodeling their basement into a

recreation room and had used edged used power pole slabs for paneling the entire thing. It looked great, and in the confines of a basement, there was absolutely no odor of creasote.

I would cut off any heavily treated butt ends, however. Good luck with your new log home.

Jackie

My husband and I fell in love with a 40-acre self-sustaining homestead, but there is a LOT of poison oak. We have 6 dogs and other animals. Please tell me if you know of a way to get rid of it as my husband is allergic to it. We have been on the hunt for five years for a place like this.

Terri Brown
huskies4you@home.com

As you found out, there's not really a perfect homestead. All have something wrong with them. The idea is to find one that has faults that you can live with. When we moved to our homestead, here in Montana, we began waging a war on spotted knapweed, a noxious, aggressive pest. The pastures were purple with it, as was the drive and even woods edges. But by simply pulling as many weeds as we could, every day we could, we've knocked it down to only a twisted, dwarfy plant that you really have to search to find.

As your husband is allergic, the bulk of the poison oak removal will fall on you. You can do it by starting in the winter and simply cutting down every poison oak shrub you can, beginning with the house-garden-



Jackie Clay

livestock pen areas first. Wear leather gloves and long sleeves, even on warmish days. Make smallish piles, on top of the stumps, when possible, and burn them when it is safe to do so. Be sure your husband does not stand where he will be in the smoke, as this can trigger an attack in some allergic people.

Be aggressive with your war on weeds, not letting up, even when all of your poison oak seems to be gone. Some will sprout from the stump. You can scorch these tender sprouts with a propane torch, which usually kills the entire plant. Or, as a last resort, you can use Roundup sprayed on the sprouts' leaves. But I really hate to use chemicals on our place.

Some folks have had luck by using goats on fenced pastures containing poison oak sprouts. One caution: don't drink the milk until the sprouts have been totally gone for at least a week.

One thought: be sure you have correctly identified your enemy. Take a sample of the leaves to your county agent if you are in doubt. It's easy to confuse with other shrubby trees. Your problem may turn out to be *much* less of a problem.

Jackie

In your Canning 101 article, you mention you make elk stew. My dad bow hunts and I always keep my eyes open for wild game recipes for him. Could you share it with me?

Donna Cashore
dcashore@pop.mainspring.com

Sure, Donna, there's not many secrets on the Clay homestead. I make several variations of elk stew, but here's the one we use the most often. We usually use home canned meat, but you can use fresh meat, as well.

Elk stew with mushrooms

2 lbs. lean cubed stew meat (or 1 quart if home canned)
¼ lb. margarine
2 medium onions, coarsely chopped
1 lb. sliced mushrooms (or 1 pint if home canned)
1 quart beef stock or equivalent
6 medium carrots, scraped and cut (or 1 pint)
8 medium potatoes, peeled and cut (or 1 pint)
1 clove garlic
1 Tbsp. brown sugar
salt & pepper to taste

Melt the margarine in heavy Dutch oven and brown meat on all sides. Add mushrooms and onions, sauteing until barely browning. Add beef stock, vegetables, brown sugar, salt and pepper. Simmer slowly until everything is **very** tender, adding water to keep juice covering stew.

When done, add flour to small bowl and enough water to make a smooth paste. Then add enough water to make the paste thin enough to pour. Pour into stew, while gently stirring. Heat enough to thicken the gravy and serve. We like it with fresh, fluffy home made biscuits. Good eating.

Jackie

What about canning meat? This would be game as well as domestic

meat. What's a good book on canning.

John Smith
mykidsdad@techie.com

Sure, John, you can home can meat. I can all types of wild game, from elk to trout, as well as beef, poultry, etc. You can check out my article, *Canning 101* in back issues of *BHM*. It covers meat as well as most everything one would can. A good, cheap book on canning is the *Ball Blue Book*, available wherever canning supplies are sold, even Wal-Mart. For a more extensive book (get a fairly recent one), check out your library, including the interlibrary loan. Look through a couple, and then order one that appeals to you from a nearby bookstore.

Jackie

I've lived in the rural south most of my adult life. I'm 38. I've long wanted to homestead, but since the death of my husband a few years ago, that dream went out the window, especially since I have no experience. Anyway, there's a possibility of moving to interior Alaska to join an established individual there. Can you offer any advice to a wilderness novice and "hothouse orchid" on how to get through the first year, especially regarding the cold? Not to mention life without indoor plumbing?

Vicky Patton
VPATTON@wii.com

I feel real bad that you've given up your homestead dream because of the death of your husband. Not only can you do it by yourself, despite your lack of "experience," but it will help heal the pain of losing a loved one.

You don't have to start with the whole tamale. You can simply start with a small piece of land, a small garden and a few chickens. Read Dorothy Ainsworth's article in the *September/October 2001* issue of

BHM on her three hens. Learn to can a few easy things, such as tomatoes, pickles, fruit, jams and jellies. Then move up to "harder" foods, as your confidence increases. Likewise, in a year or two, you may want to try a dairy goat and a pig to raise to butcher.

Being a self-reliant homesteader doesn't have to mean doing everything; it's a dream, a goal to work toward to satisfy your soul. It means something different to everyone.

If you decide to go to Alaska, great. But be sure you save enough money to do something different if your arrangement with the established individual doesn't work out. Some just don't, even in the city. It won't help if you feel trapped in a situation that doesn't suit your needs.

When we talk about Alaska or northern Minnesota, the first thing everyone says is "How can you take the cold?" It really isn't that bad, if you dress for it. (You can always put more or better clothes on in cold weather....you run out of things to take off when it's over 100 degrees in the shade.)

I love the cold and snow, being snowed in for long periods of time. It gives me time to do my best baking and cooking, as there's just plain more time in the winter.

And don't just stay in because it's snowy and cold. There's so much to do out there. I mush dogs on a dogsled, run a snowmobile, snowshoe, feed the birds, study animal tracks, feed the moose (yes I know they're a pain, sometimes), make snow caves and much more. And on days that it's just plain too cold to be out, I work on a novel, read, do puzzles, can meat hanging (frozen) in the woodshed from hunting, write letters I've been putting off, try new recipes and a whole lot more. "Cabin Fever" is not a joke. Folks get depressed when they see winter as only a dark, cold, miserable time. I look on it as a time of rest and enjoyment.

As for the “no plumbing” living, it’s really not that bad. You keep a path shoveled to the outhouse. Leave the lid up or the seat will frost up. In really cold weather, carry a foam doughnut inside and out and it’ll be more comfy on the throne. At night, use a bucket for tinkles and dump it in the outhouse every morning, rinsing the bucket with water or snow to prevent potty smell in the cabin.

Water is usually dipped from a lake, creek or river in the summer. In the winter, snow may be melted or a hole can be chopped in a body of water (don’t fall in). We used to bathe in a washtub on the kitchen floor quite effectively. Water was heated on the wood cookstove in a canning kettle. About six inches was poured in the washtub and we’d climb in. Our son, David, was young and could fit in the tub like a bathtub. We stood in the tub and dipped water over ourselves with a saucepan, washing all necessary parts with a washcloth. Rinsing was accomplished in the same manner. Worked good and used only a five gallon bucket of water.

Most wilderness novices are afraid of wild animals, mostly due to the many movies using a “savage,” well trained, Bart the bear. In truth, wild animals are very, very seldom ever a problem to folks living in the wild. We have lived in the bush for many, many years and have never had a wild animal bother us a bit. They are shy and rarely seen. And they won’t break the door down to eat you for dinner. Hollywood only. I’m a lot more afraid of people than I am animals.

Moose can be dangerous. A cow moose traveling with a calf is very protective and a bull moose during fall rut can be aggressive. But use common sense; we’ve not been trampled by a moose yet and we feed them in the winter.

Another thing that Hollywood portrays is people getting deathly sick in the wilderness, with no help. In reality, we have always been much health-

ier in the wilderness, going all winter without so much as a sniffle. The only time we seem to get sick is when we go to town and are exposed to other folks’ germs. Take a small bag of routine cold/flu meds with you, as well as any prescription drugs you need.

Whatever you decide to do, do it with a can-do attitude, because you *can* do it. I know a whole lot of single ladies out there who homestead alone and are happy in their lives. One is an 88-year youngster in the mountains of Wyoming. Go for it. Maybe you’ll find a new man in your life somewhere along the way, too. Things happen. Good luck.

Jackie

Do you know whether it is possible to process sugar beet at home (preferably in a simple chemical-free way), to produce sugar? I have found plenty of articles on maple sugar, but we don't have the right kind of maple tree in England.

Sarah Hogan

sarahemu@hotmail.com

Unfortunately, it is a factory-only process to get sugar from sugar beets, and a process that makes me try to use less sugar all the time. Have you ever thought of raising bees for honey, instead of using sugar? Most recipes are very adaptable to using honey over sugar. Bees are quite easy to raise (I’ve only been stung twice while keeping bees. And I was working them without being “suited up” because they were so gentle.) A single hive would give you more than enough honey for a whole year. Besides, bees are very interesting to study.

Jackie

I'm looking for an old recipe. It's called Virginia Chunk Sweet Pickles. My mom made them for years, then I made them for years and now my daughter wants to make them and I

have lost the recipe. We always put green food color in them to make them bright green. Nice at Christmas time.

Arlene Parkhurst
tjpark@sorcom.com

Not only have I heard of Virginia Chunk Sweet Pickles, but I have jars of them on my pantry shelves right now. They’re good, crispy pickles, alright. Here’s the recipe:

Virginia chunk sweet pickles:

Use seventy-five 4 to 5 inch long cukes, or 2 gallons of smaller ones. Make a brine using 2 cups salt to one gallon of water. Boil the brine and pour it over cucumbers while it’s still boiling hot. Weight down with a dish to keep the pickles under the brine. Let them stand one week, removing the scum daily. Then drain off the liquid and cut the cukes into chunks. For the next three mornings make a boiling solution of one gallon water and one tablespoon powdered alum and pour this over the drained pickles. (Make a fresh hot bath each morning.) On the fourth morning, drain and discard alum water. Heat 6 cups vinegar, 5 cups sugar, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup pickling spice and 1 Tbsp. celery seed to boiling and pour over pickles. On the fifth morning drain this liquid off into a sauce pan and add 2 more cups of sugar to it, heat again to boiling and pour back over the pickles. On the sixth morning drain the liquid, add 1 more cup of sugar to it, heat it again to boiling, pack the pickles into sterilized jars and fill to within $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of the top with the boiling liquid. Put on the caps and screw the bands firmly tight. Process the jars in a boiling water bath for 5 minutes. Yield: 18 pts.

Don’t cheat and add all the sugar at once, or your pickles will shrivel.

Jackie

I can't believe how much trouble I am having canning green beans. I know it can't be that hard but I can't

seem to accomplish it. What am I doing wrong? I snap them into short pieces and put them in cold jars. I put on new lids with rings and put them in a canning kettle with water just up to the rings. I boiled them for at least an hour (last year I tried it without success and assumed it was too short a boiling time). I am getting frustrated because I have done it successfully before.

Mary Stoneberg
stonebrg@midlands.net

I really hate to see folks have trouble home canning. I want everyone to be successful, and I can get you started down the right trail. I can understand why your beans didn't turn out. First, you *must* can low acid foods, such as vegetables and meat with a pressure canner. You cannot safely use a water bath canner for green beans.

A basic how-to for green bean canning goes like this:

Snap your beans into a clean jar. Put your lids into a small saucepan and bring to a boil; remove from heat and keep in water. Put a tea kettle full of water on to boil. Fill quart jars to within 1 inch of the top with green beans and add 1 tsp. of salt, if desired, per quart (half as much salt for pints). Add 2 inches of water to your canner and put on the stove. Fill the jars to within 1 inch of top with the boiling water. Wipe the rims of jars and place the lids in place, screwing rings down firmly-tight. Place the jars in the rack inside the canner and tighten the canner's lid down firmly. Exhaust steam for 10 minutes to remove air from the canner. Shut the petcock(s) and let the pressure build to 10 lbs. (or higher, depending on altitude above 1,000 ft.; see your canning manual). When the gauge reads the correct pressure, begin timing and adjust the heat to keep the pressure constant. Maintain this pressure for 20 minutes for pints and 25 for quarts. When the time is up, turn off the heat and let gauge return to zero

with no help from you. Then open the petcock to bleed off any remaining steam. Carefully open the canner and, using jar lifters, remove the jars. Place the jars on a dry folded towel to cool. The jars will seal as they cool, ping, ping, ping.

My best advice to all home canners is to buy a canning manual, such as the *Ball Blue Book*, available where canning supplies are sold, and read up before canning each type of food. I've been canning for 30 some years, and haul it out every time...just in case I've forgotten something.

Jackie

I have just made horseradish for the first time and it's hot. They say that to keep your horseradish hot you have to keep it cold. If so, how do you get the vacuum seal if you don't heat it like in canning. The storebought stuff has a vacuum seal and can be hot depending on the brand. Do you know how it is done?

Neal Pomfret
Ajax, Ontario

I've not had much trouble keeping horseradish hot when processing; it's either good and hot, or it's not. Here's how I put it up. I think you'll like it this way.

Grate your horseradish root finely. Measure the result and measure enough vinegar into a saucepan to equal to half the horseradish. Add ½ teaspoon of salt to each cup of vinegar. Have sterilized jars, held hot, and boiled lids ready. You will need your water bath canner full enough to cover your jars, plus 1 inch. This needs to be hot and ready, as well.

Boil your vinegar-salt solution, then add horseradish and bring back to a boil. Dip the horseradish out quickly and fill jars to within ½ inch of the top, wipe the rim, place a lid on and screw the ring down firmly tight. Place filled jars in a water bath canner and process for 15 minutes at a

rolling boil, counting from the time your canner first comes to a full boil.

Jackie

I would like to know what the shelf life is of home canned food. We have canned for some time, and our food is kept in a cool, dark, dry place.

Patrick Widner
Bristol, VA

Well, Pat, you've hit on the very reason I home can! Your food will last nearly forever! Despite what consumer protection police say, canned food is not just good for a year. I've got 23 year old pie cherries, canned on my pantry shelves; moose stew that is 11 years old, potatoes that are 12 years old, etc, etc. And they all look and taste perfectly fine. I'm sure they may have lost a bit of vitamins, but when combined with all the other fresh food we eat and the fact that it was home grown and put up quickly with no chemicals, we certainly don't worry about *that*.

Some fruits will soften a bit or lose color, but this does not affect their use in cobblers, pies and other cooking. And they are more than edible.

You sure can't say that when freezing food. We only freeze food to keep large quantities while I am canning. For instance, we'll hang an elk (dressed and skinned, covered with old clean sheets) frozen in a tree, cutting off a quarter with a chainsaw (vegetable oil in oiler!), to thaw so I can home can it. That's it, for us, **period**. Once my food is in a jar, it won't freezer burn or spoil because of power outages.

Jackie

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Ayoob on Firearms:

What's next? What can you do?

By Massad Ayoob

On September 11, 2001, the commentators say, "Everything changed." The extent of that change is still being measured by each of us.

Every one of us will remember where we were when we first learned of the atrocities of 9/11/01. It was to our generation what Pearl Harbor had been to our parents. Amidst the horror and the rage, there was a distinct sense of loss of innocence...and of present, continuing danger.

The degree to which American lives will be changed remains uncertain. There is a strong drive to acclimatize the public to a necessary loss of liberty in the name of security. The privacy matters are a concept I will leave to John Silveira, who is better informed and more articulate on the privacy issues than I. Suffice to say that I believe Benjamin Franklin had the best handle on the matter when he said: *"They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."*

We are told by the pundits, "Everything has changed." It's the details that are not clear yet. In the days and weeks that followed, there was a run on guns and ammunition and gas masks. As we look to countries that have dealt with terrorism at home, we see something similar. During Desert Storm, we all watched on CNN as Israeli citizens donned gas masks in fear of chemical attacks by Saddam Hussein. Osama bin Laden, considered by most Americans the architect of the attack of the 11th, has been known to experiment with biotoxins as tools of ter-

ror. His minions were exploring the possibilities of crop-duster aircraft, apparently with such forays in mind. Never mind whether or not the crop-duster is a viable tool for dealing such mass death. The point is, they were looking for it.

An M-19 surplus gas mask strikes me as a sensible purchase. It also makes sense to have a few cheap gauze masks in each vehicle and in the home. They were a godsend to the rescuers in New York, who had to work in a choking haze of asbestos dust and other toxic substances.

Those I know in the intelligence services tell me that the World Trade Center and the Pentagon attacks were only the first shot of the fusillade. Enough bin Laden puppets have reportedly been sent underground in the U.S. to deliver many more atrocities. Given the history of such suspects in the past, there are certain patterns of attack that can be anticipated.

Attacks on water, electric, and travel

The initial attacks were directed at some of the most high profile structures in major cities to "make a statement" and maximize fear with huge casualties. Poisoning reservoirs is doable, and it's something counter-terrorism experts have warned us about for a long time. Terrorists will also be aware of what our concerns were as the nation prepared for Y2K. Attacks on power plants would fulfill those fears.

You saw what the incidents of September 11 did to air travel. Recall also that in early October a whacko slashed the throat of a Greyhound bus driver in the Nashville area, killing six when the vehicle crashed. This



Massad Ayoob

turned out not to be a terrorist incident, but Greyhound still froze all its bus travel for a good seven hours. It would not be difficult for terrorists to engineer events that could temporarily paralyze air, road, and rail traffic, resulting in a shortage of food and other necessary goods. All the more reason to go back to the "Y2K preparedness level": Lots of food and water on hand, generator ready, the whole bit.

Travel concerns

I am less inclined than usual at the moment to drive across large bridges. These big structures will go in a spectacular way if blown up. The cutting of the enemy's bridges is ancient wartime doctrine. We are up against people who study the ways of the ancient warriors.

Similarly, I would rather not be spending a lot of time in tunnels. Back at the time of the Olympics in

Los Angeles, law enforcement was worried about terrorists hijacking a couple of fuel tanker trucks. If it's a one-mile tunnel, they travel a mile apart. As terrorist A is about to emerge from the tunnel, he pulls sideways to block all lanes of traffic, flips a toggle switch, and runs out of the tunnel and into the open air, leaving the truck behind. His partner, terrorist B, does the same at the entry to the tunnel, a mile behind him. The switches they've flipped arm time bombs that are set to go off very soon. The gasoline tankers erupt spectacularly, and every motorist trapped in that mile of tunnel is soon either burned to a crisp or suffocated.

In the early days after the Twin Towers destruction, FBI discovered that several suspects and people linked to them had acquired truck drivers' licenses, including licenses authorizing them to transport hazardous materials.

When aboard a plane

Many say that there will be no replay of the events of September 11 because of improved airline security, because the passengers will all rise up and overpower the hijackers as apparently happened on Flight 93 that terrible day, or because "they've already done that."

I can only reply, "What!?!?" The argument that "they won't do it again because they've already done it" is ludicrous. Yeah, and in 1945, Nagasaki was safe because our people had "already done that" at Hiroshima.

Improved security precautions? It'll be a while before enough sky marshals can be put in place to cover every domestic flight, if that ever happens at all.

In commercial air travel since this incident, I've only once been patted down, and then unprofessionally. Ceramic or plastic knives can still easily be smuggled through security

by those who don't worry about law-breaking.

Travelers need to follow the paradigm of the heroes of Flight 93. That aircraft crashed in Pennsylvania fields instead of into the US Capitol Building or the White House because at least four brave Americans rose up against hijackers who were armed with edged weapons. Did one or more of those courageous passengers have small knives of their own, that they were able to put to good use? We may never know. We do know that in the foreseeable future, you won't have even a nail file to protect yourself if dangerous people arise in the passenger compartment to threaten others.

I am hoping we've seen the last of the "suicide hijackings." I suspect that the bin Laden moles still in the country have been glued to CNN and are aware that American air travelers are in a mood to rise up and, bare-handed, swarm the next set of hijackers. If they choose to abandon the tactics they used on September 11, it will not be because they're afraid of sky marshals. It will be because they're afraid of people just like you.

Body armor

At this writing, there is nothing that prevents the law-abiding citizen from wearing concealed body armor, either in public or aboard a jetliner. A very sharp stabbing implement can go through a vest that would stop a .44 Magnum slug, but in the field it rarely happens. The favored weapon of the 9/11/01 terrorists was a boxcutter. This is a slashing weapon, and even with big knives, a vest made of Kevlar or Spectra should defeat a slash attack.

Travel with a gun

As long as the danger exists, it's a good idea to bring a gun and ammunition with you when traveling long distances by automobile. If we have another incident like those of the

eleventh, you and I are unlikely to be the initial victims. However, air travel was shut down the last time, stranding people for days. If you have to strike out for home on land—perhaps hitch-hiking, if a run on rental cars has emptied the Hertz and Avis lots, and train or bus service have been disrupted—being unarmed and helpless just won't be any fun.

My wife was in Nevada on the 11th. There are a lot worse places to be trapped. However, thinking she might have to drive cross-country, she saw a need to be armed. I faxed her a copy of her Federal Firearms (dealer's) License, with which she bought herself a compact Smith & Wesson .38 Special at a local gunshop. Without the FFL, she would have been SOL, since Federal law prohibits a dealer from selling a handgun to a non-dealer who lives out of state. Lesson learned: she'll have her own gun in the suitcase on the next trip. At this writing, Federal Air Regulation 108.11 remains in effect, and it is legal for any law abiding citizen to fly on commercial carriers with an unloaded handgun in one hard-shell suitcase and the ammunition in another. Make sure, however, that you're going to be legal to be in possession of the gun where you land.

High risk days

Major American holidays will be high risk. Terrorists will appreciate the impact of alarming Americans on days when we traditionally celebrate peace and security: Thanksgiving, for instance, or Christmas. Large gatherings of citizens, such as stadium events, also have a high "target priority" according to what anti-terrorism experts teach us.

Carrying concealed

The first attacks focused on mass death in huge numbers. Terrorists know they can make the impact they want with lower body counts. As the

Israelis have learned, bombs detonated in department stores and restaurants achieve the evil goal of terrorizing and intimidating the public. Ditto “mass shootings.”

Some years ago, a group of terrorists opened fire on the citizenry on a city sidewalk in Israel. In seconds, the terrorists themselves were down; they had been riddled with the return fire of armed Israeli citizens. When he recovered from his wounds, the sole surviving terrorist seemed indignant about it: no one had warned him that his victims might shoot back.

The United States is a country which, historically, shoots back. If these incidents start happening here, I hope they at least happen in one of the increasing number of states where citizens can be licensed to carry concealed and loaded handguns in public. That can, as in the Israeli incident mentioned above, turn a massacre of the innocent into a short gunfight with as happy an ending as gunfights ever have.

Attacks in the hinterlands

What happened in New York City and Washington, DC has doubtless reinforced the decision of so many of our readers to live in rural areas. However, just because the first attacks hit metropolitan cities doesn't mean that plan is locked in stone for bin Laden and his followers. Again, look to Israel, whose enemies are largely the same as what we face now. Yes, the terrorists may strike in the heart of downtown Tel Aviv...but they are also known to strike at the remotest kibbutz.

Imagine yourself as Osama bin Laden. You want to strike terror into the heart of a people. You will reach not just to the capital, but to the heartlands and the hinterlands. People of the countryside see the cities as somehow remote from them. Terror visited upon the people of a village frightens those in the other villages. I

would not be at all surprised to see small town schools or town halls on the terrorists' list of targets.

Emergency personnel

Captured materials indicate that it was part of the terrorists' plan to strike the first target, allow rescue personnel to begin their efforts, then deliver a second strike in hopes of killing rescuers. They succeeded all too well. The death toll includes over 300 firefighters, numerous emergency medical personnel, 23 New York City police officers, and perhaps 37 Port Authority cops, plus at least one Federal agent. Neither the fire service nor the police service has ever taken such a massively fatal “hit” in the history of both institutions in the United States.

The tragedy has engendered more respect for the nation's emergency service providers. People are more likely to use all their fingers when they wave at a cop lately.

If you have lived for any length of time in a rural community, you probably know volunteers on the ambulance service, volunteer firefighters, and part-time cops. You may have been invited to join one or more of these agencies. People volunteering to make up for lack of a populous tax base that can pay for a full-time, full-service department is a longstanding tradition in rural America. Be advised, those admirable people may be in more danger than before if terrorism moves to the hinterlands.

The perpetrator of what was previously our nation's worst terrorist attack, Tim McVeigh, was pulled over on a highway and captured by a lone state trooper. No cops in America work lonelier posts than the US Border Patrol, yet it was they who captured Ahmad Rashad before he could fulfill his admitted goal of detonating a large bomb at Los Angeles International Airport.

Even when terrorists strike in the cities, they often flee to the heart-

lands. This cancerous tumor inside the body of the United States of America has metastasized widely. More of these dangerous people are going to surface in this country. Some, perhaps more than you'd expect, will be captured somewhere off the beaten metropolitan path.

Attack on the President?

George W. Bush told us no lie. It will be a long, hard road to avenge—as I think we must—the horrors of September 11. Our nation will be misunderstood. It's happening already, worldwide, and we're seeing it in microcosm in our own country. On the day of the incident, a certain high profile newscaster implied that the President was in hiding. The President was doing his job, which included denying the enemy one of its prize targets. Not since JFK has a President been in so much personal danger. Having given the “dead or alive” order on the megalomaniac false Moslem bin Laden, the bankroller of terrorists will doubtless “shoot back.” The next “big target,” if the group in question wants to show its power, may not be the Sears Tower or the Empire State Building. It may be George W. Bush.

Hate crimes

Within three weeks of the atrocity, the FBI was investigating some 90 serious hate crimes against people of Middle Eastern appearance or descent. These have been committed by troglodytes so clueless they can't tell Moslems from Sikhs. Such bozos certainly will have trouble figuring out that bin Laden and company are not a problem comprised of Moslems, but a problem comprised of radical Islamists.

A false Moslem

True Moslems understand that their faith rigidly prohibits the murder of innocent children and old people, such as those sacrificed in such great

number on the 11th. Only a false Moslem could claim to be ordering such murders in the name of God. Even those who think the suicide bombers were heroic martyrs will have some doubts about bin Laden when they figure out that bin Laden literally stole their souls. A Moslem who has murdered innocent children can no more go to heaven than one who has intercourse with pigs; this is clear from any reading of the Koran.

Investigations are even indicating that bin Laden and his co-conspirators sold stock short in a way to take advantage of the tragedy a short time before they caused it.

The genuine, devout Moslems will eventually figure out that the false Moslem bin Laden (a) is responsible for the deaths of countless innocent children and old people, as well as the younger and more able-bodied victims; (b) murdered his own followers by sending them on this murder/suicide mission; (c) stole those

men's souls; and (d) lined his pockets while doing it.

Honest Moslems are already vehemently distancing themselves from these heinous acts by heinous people. That will accelerate if and when all Moslem clergy, particularly those in the Middle East, frankly assess the actions of bin Laden and his followers in light of their holy book.

Arming pilots

Air travel needs to be made safer. This means more and more highly trained security personnel, and it would be facilitated by arming the pilots. This is not a radical step requested by the National Rifle Association. It is a logical step presented by the Airline Pilot's Association itself. In the '30s and '40s, most pilots carried guns. It was to protect the mail they carried. History shows no record of any problems with that: no pilots shooting copilots in arguments, no passengers

getting control of their guns, or anything similar. Pilots carried guns of their own aboard airlines through the '80s, when the mandate was made that ended the practice.

Yes, things will change. For now, keep your powder dry, your gun loaded and locked, your larder full, and your senses alert. Δ

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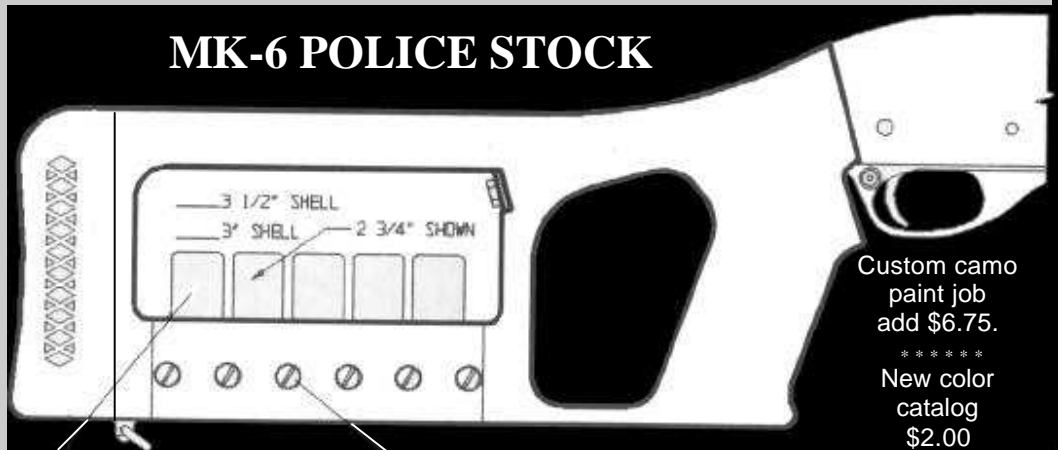
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Letters

(Dear Readers - Thank you for writing to Backwoods Home Magazine. The opinions and suggestions we receive from our readers are very important to us. We regret that we are no longer able to print or individually respond to every letter received due to the volume. We do read every letter received, and pass them along to the editor or writer concerned. We print a selection from our mail that best represents the views and concerns of our readers.

— The Editors)

Thank you

Your magazine is truly the "light" in our lives. It has provided us comfort when there wasn't any knowing that inside your issues were the answers to many problems that we could simply "follow the instructions" and get on with a more self-reliant attitude.

Mr. Troy Hammond & family
Rogers City, MI

Applause

I have really enjoyed the way the magazine has developed over the years. I said it then and I will say it again. Thank you for a publication that I can leave out on the coffee table, without anyone thinking I'm strange. Well no stranger than usual anyway.

Dennis & Dory Wooley
Oklahoma City, OK

Can't survive without BHM

OK, OK, OK, I give up. I thought I could survive without Backwoods Home. I can't. Enclosed is my check.

David Wallace Johnson
Superior Township, MI

Hydro/gun articles

We are building a homestead in the mountains doing everything ourselves. The property is off the grid so thanks for the articles on hydro power. We bought the solar portawattz power pac you advertised

and really like it. Our most fun project had been a wood fired hot tub. Nothing like it after a hard day working. And thanks Ayoob for all the information and insight on gun ownership!

Cyndi Ream, Colville, WA

Duffy for president

Just read "Should we retaliate against terrorists?" Have you considered running for president? Finally someone with a sensible world-view! Too bad some of the folks inside the "Beltway" don't have this much wisdom.

Troy Craig, Marysville, WA

For Claire Wolfe

I've just discovered BHM today, and I found your article. It has many good points useful as information for those who don't know, and a review for those of us that do.

However, I must take exception with your statement, "Other groups that have continued to do heroes' work at a time when the world is turning from freedom include the ACLU, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, and the Free Congress Foundation."

My exposure to the ACLU is that they practice "pick and choose" support of civil liberties according to their own agenda. For example, while they support a pornographer's "right" to publish filth as "freedom of speech," they reject my right to own and use firearms to defend life and home as something that is outdated, or never the intent of the 2nd Amendment in the first place. Instead, the ACLU would have us depend on the police, and the national guard (militia??), which, if new laws take more civil liberties from us, will be the means of enforcing those laws.

I will subscribe to BHM and continue to read your articles, but I hope you see the inconsistency in recommending the ACLU as a defender of our freedoms.

Steve Smith, Layton, UT

How ironic Claire Wolfe's article should appear in a magazine that purchased my name and subscription information from another magazine publisher who had a privacy policy that evidently wasn't worth the paper it was written upon.

I do like Backwoods Home and had planned to subscribe, but I don't appreciate your acquiring my information in such a manner. Do you plan to walk the talk?

Name and address withheld

Pocket Constitutions

I've been sort of handing out pocket copies of the Constitution and Bill of Rights at a pretty good clip lately. Enclosed is \$60. Please send me another 20 copies.

Lee McGee, Jeanerette, LA

Filling a void

I felt lack of a millennium civil disruption or disaster caused the demise of A.S.G. No one envisioned the tragic events of 9-11-01 and the crisis bestowed upon America.

With the anthrax terrorism, the scare of mass smallpox infection, and the anxiety of facing an unstable future, the citizens are searching for answers.

The media offers little for self preservation and protection. Militaristic magazines don't present for the general population. Civil defense literature is from the cold war era of the 1950s and is far obsolete.

It is time for a magazine, such as Backwoods Home, to step up and fill the void with information Americans urgently seek.

I trust that you have contacted the former advertisers of A.S.G.

Advertisers are a vital resource for those of us seeking specific products or information.

I am unfamiliar with your format as far as self-help medical articles. Having been an army medic and a ten year American Red Cross instructor, I found most medical articles in A.S.G. were accurate and educational.

Here's my check for a two year subscription, and a "thank you" for your informative magazine.

Ron Trimble, Modesto, CA

A 2nd revolution

I enjoyed Claire Wolfe's article but I do not like to be classed as an outlaw because I choose to live free by the Constitution which is in support of my God given rights as a human being. You might as well face it. The Fascists, Socialists, wanabe dictators, have control of the country. They are the ones who make the laws, regulations etc. at all levels of government. They are not going to give up all the control, power and money they have taken from the people...

George Smith, Jr., Moravia, NY

4x4 living

I enjoyed your article, "Tips and handy hints for 4x4 living," and have a few additional points your readers may find useful.

First, in deep snow, sand or mud, or on rocky terrain you can increase traction dramatically by reducing air pressure in our tires. A tire at lower pressure has a larger footprint and is more pliable. I use my truck for occasional rock crawling and routinely lower the tires to about 10-15 PSI. Note, of course that these pressures are not safe for prolonged highway use.

Additionally, locking differentials such as Detroit Lockers or PowerTrax LockRights are indispensable when navigating truly difficult terrain. In a truck with open differentials (standard equipment on most vehicles) when one tire begins to slip,

virtually all engine power is transferred to the slipping tire and traction is effectively lost. With a locker, power is split equally between the wheels and the tire which is not slipping will continue to move the truck. After owning vehicles with lockers I find 4x4's without them are akin to 2 wheel drive vehicles in comparison.

I'm glad to see the warning with respect to tow straps and winch cables. When these break they can be deadly to anyone within range.

Seth Ambrose, sda@cisco.com

Responding to terrorism

I'm just about to subscribe to BHM for the first time. I've been reading it from the newsstand for two years now. I also read American Survival Guide/Self-Reliance Journal, before they decided to go CPC (California Politically Correct) and went belly-up.

My experience as a trained SWAT member and several years of schools that dug into the terrorist's mind, have lead me to believe, we must retaliate; and retaliate hard. This is the only thing they understand. A former Islamic Militant that taught one school said that most terrorists believe that we will not retaliate, or if we do, it will be a cruise missile on a building or two, but no real consequences. He stated that this is the reason they do not fear the USA. However, look at Israel. You may find an occasional car bomb, etc. in Israel, but these bad guys know that anything they do that causes big harm, will result in a serious butt-whippin' by the Star of David, that involves a lot of screaming, death and destruction. Simply put, we haven't learned how to play the game yet. Study a little history on Israel, and you'll find that most of the terrorist attacks are Palestinian Militants trying to get some land back. But the big guys, like Bin-Laden, talk big about destroying Israel, but usually steer

clear of it. They know what will happen.

It's kind of simple; they destroy one of our buildings, we destroy one of their cities. They blow up a square block, we blow up 10 square miles. They will get the message and so will the countries that support them. Israel has not stayed alive by sitting back and worrying about what the terrorists are going to do next. They have aggressive intelligence, and a butt-kickin attitude. These terrorists know that Americans are sitting at home thinking, "Oh my, if we retaliate, they will only hit us harder." That my friend is why we are the target! By the way, don't be fooled by the suitcase nuke thing. Yes the media has played it time and again, but don't be fooled into thinking that every terrorist out there has one ready to go. It's just not that simple. It could happen, but not quite yet. It depends on our actions, and how badly we want to stop these guys.

Donnie B., dondrum@bellsouth.net

Reflects my views

Along with the renewal of my subscription is a note of appreciation for a publication that reflects my political views. I taught in a public school for forty years and I have seen evidence that there is still a deep conservative streak in the political strata of the U.S. and this streak of conservatism needs to be nourished, cultivated—it needs to be exposed to the "light" of publicity, have questions asked (questions reveal strengths and weaknesses.)...

Gerald Crisp, Buras, LA

ASG readers

Too bad American Survival Guide had to become politically correct and fold. But I feel your magazine surpasses them.

Your publication is moving up on my list of "must read" right beside the American Free Press (formerly the Spotlight.)

Sad, that in this country, so many papers and magazines bow to the controlling establishment, never questioning news and releases or presenting the public with the information they need to make the right choices. Not that many would know what to do with it. Seems as most of the sheeple don't want the truth.

Robert D. Schaffer, Marsing, ID

Many thanks for picking up that defunct mag and fulfilling their subscription obligations with a fabulous magazine. We love BHM.

The McKinleys, Smithville, TX

I have received your "complimentary" copy of Backwoods Home Magazine. Thank you. I was a subscriber to ASG for nearly ten years. I wrote to them and spoke with Mr. Benson several times on the phone. I was disappointed with the change made to ASG when they went "PC" and wrote to Mr. Benson telling him I was not renewing my subscription and told him I felt they had "sold out." That is the reason I had one issue remaining when they folded. I had no fore knowledge they were folding until I received your magazine.

I will tell you that you seem like a breath of truth after the sad decline of ASG.

Wallace Brucker, Dallas, TX

Welcome back to relevant issues! Speaking as one who was about to become a former subscriber to ASG (and unasked recipient of SRJ) I was delighted to see that the third change was the charm. I will be renewing my subscription and enthusiastically recommending your publication to my many outdoorsman friends. I am particularly interested in off-grid power systems. Here in beautiful Arizona we have more sun than we know what to do with. Photovoltaic energy is the most ecologically conscionable resource for electrical generation in

existence and along with wind and hydro driven systems could reduce the rate at which our worldwide fossil fuel resources are being expended. Excuse my leap onto the soap box. Off-grid is becoming a driving issue for me and any resource for practical measures is a blessing. Again, welcome to our coffee table, and don't change a thing...please!

Charles F. Knight, Phoenix, AZ

Dictatorship series

I have been a subscriber of BHM for several years now. When each issue of BHM arrives, I'm like a little kid with a new toy—just can't wait to get into it. But with each issue after reading your latest addition to "The coming American dictatorship," I have to restrain myself not to run out and collar everyone I know to get them to read it.

My wife suggested I submit it to the newspapers, since she knows how much I love to put in my two cents worth submitting letters to the editors—and have had quite a few printed, too (even one in BHM.) After carefully explaining it's much too lengthy to be accepted in the letters section, she said "Well, you'll just have to shorten it, won't you?" So I did.

Sir, I want to apologize for plagiarizing your article. I tried to credit you as the author but the editor wouldn't print it if I wouldn't sign my name to it. I hope you will forgive me. There's no way I could do justice to your written word; but, I wanted to send you the clipping of my condensed version, printed 9-6-01 in The Daily Advertiser, Lafayette, Louisiana.

Lee McGee, Jeanerette, LA

Chicken house

Thank you for the info about Ford, Chevy and the others. I need to get another vehicle and you have helped me make my decision. As for the others, I will be very careful and not buy

their items. As for the hen house, "This coop is for the birds," I would not chink stones or what-have-you under the 4x4s. Easy access for varmints to get in. I would bury 2 ft high x 1" chicken fence heavy gauge about 12-18" in the ground, put up a 5'x2" fence around the sides and top, then wire them together (bottom as well)...As for the roof—rolled grit tar paper is fine double coverage—better, but not necessary. As for the size of the coop 4'x6'=24 sq. ft. There's enough room for 6 to 7 hens. Raise the nest box up 1 ft. from the floor. (More room for the chickens.)

I have a coop that's 21 years old...I keep 15-16 hens and a rooster...3 to 4 more birds than needed but it works. The birds keep themselves warm in the winter, but I put an infrared light in the house for cold winter days and nights and turn it off when not needed with a timer and a 40 watt bulb for 14 hours of light in the winter (better egg product.) Keep the timer in your home as it wouldn't last long in the coop or garage. It needs to be kept warm. I could write more on chickens, turkeys and other animals. Well I hope I have helped.

Joe Paolilli, N. Billerica, MA

Backwoods cookbook

I love your magazine but everytime that I need a recipe, I dig through all my Backwoods Home Magazines or the anthologies. Boy, it would be wonderful for us gals to have a backwoods home cookbook to use in our kitchens, and it would be a compilation of all the recipes you have ever printed. I know I would pay a handsome sum for this book! What do you think? I saw you at the Portland expo center and bought one more anthology and some magazines. It was the Y2K convention. Loved it. Thanks.

Denise, Gcanddr5249@cs.com

I think that's a great idea. I'll do the work if Dave will give the ok for the project. —Ilene

The last word

Mistaken for a terrorist

My heart goes out to those Americans and visitors of Arabic heritage who have experienced discrimination and persecution in the wake of Black Tuesday. I know what they are going through. In 1972, I was mistaken for a terrorist in a foreign country.

Footloose and fancy-free after three years in the Army, I had decided to spend the summer hitch-hiking through Europe. A highlight of the trip was to be a week in Germany, visiting Army buddies who had been transferred there. I knew no German, but had been reassured that “everybody speaks English.” It wasn’t true, but that wasn’t the worst of it.

Unknown to me, a band of terrorists called the “Bader-Meinhoff Gang” had been blowing up military bases and hospitals there. They pretended to be American citizens trying to visit friends on U.S. military bases. They carried fake U.S. passports and dressed like student vagabonds. A week before I arrived in Germany, a police artist, working with a survivor of their attacks, put together a composite sketch of the gang’s leader. He looked a lot like me.

Over the next week I was stopped by German police again and again. I was thrown up against walls and had loaded rifles thrust into my stomach while they screamed at me in German. Each time the local police captain eventually concluded that I was just a dumb tourist and he chased me away in disgust. No one ever explained to me what was going on or why I was being harassed.

On one occasion, as I slept in a hotel, I was awakened, late at night, by a huge German police dog that was snarling at my throat. Quickly I found myself spread-eagled against the wall, pinned there by a beast the size of a small pony. His paws were on my chest, and he was snarling directly into my face, snapping and foaming at the mouth. The hotel manager, who was holding him by a leash made from logging chain, explained that the dog was trained to sniff out drugs, and began searching my pack. When he brought out a small package wrapped in brown paper, and the dog started barking furiously, I feared the worst.

Earlier, I had caught a ride with a German fellow, who also picked up a couple of Moroccan Arabs. We had a wonderful time, laughing and joking in French, our only common language. Before we realized it, the youth hostel where we planned to stay was closed, and we had only enough money between us for two to sleep in a hotel. The banks were closed, too, so we pooled our money and drew straws to see who would sleep in the car. Fritz and I won, loaned our sleeping bags to the Moroccans, and checked into the hotel. Those Moroccans! Had they planted drugs on us and

then turned us in? All these thoughts flashed through my mind as the manager opened the package.

It turned out to be nothing more than the remains of a ham sandwich. I’d been eating it two days before, when I was offered a ride. I had stuffed it in my pack and forgotten it

completely. We gave it to the dog, and the manager stalked off, muttering threats under his breath. Fritz and I had a good laugh about it the next morning. If only all my experiences in Germany had been so innocent.

One event stands out in that week of hell. Someone with a car phone must have reported seeing me in a car. Thinking they had caught the leader of the Bader-Meinhoff Gang, police and soldiers descended en masse, stopping all the traffic on the autobahn and searching every car. I was riding in the back seat when the traffic came to a halt. I thought there must be a terrible accident to stop the traffic going both ways. Then I saw the cops and soldiers searching cars and figured it was a big drug bust. I felt not the slightest bit of apprehension until the soldiers opened my door and yanked me out of the car.

I lay dazedly on my back on the autobahn pavers, surrounded by dozens of heavily armed soldiers. As I looked up past at least a dozen loaded rifle muzzles, I saw an army helicopter circling above me, complete with rockets. Two machine gunners were hanging out of the doors. All were aimed at me. I think it was then that I wet my pants.

The soldiers kept me flat on my back for a long time, grilling me in German. The only German I knew I had learned from late night World War II movies, and I knew better than to use it. Eventually they found a Wehrmacht captain who knew some English. I’m sure he thought I was just playing dumb, but after a while it was obvious even to him that I was not a hardened terrorist. After what seemed half a lifetime, he curtly apologized, telling me “there was a mistake.” But I’d had enough. The next day, leaving Germany, I caught a ride with a German-speaking Canadian who finally told me what was going on. It’s been 30 years, but I’ve never gone back, even though the Bader-Meinhoff Gang have all been captured.

I was very lucky. Several times I could have been killed, but never received a scratch. In my innocence, I thought the soldiers and police very rude. In fact, they were amazingly well-disciplined. But I am living proof that not everyone who looks like a terrorist is one. No matter how angry we are, if we attack the innocent, based solely on their appearance, we become tyrants and terrorists ourselves. Δ

—Don Fallick

